

# THE FINE ARTS' JOURNAL;

A WEEKLY RECORD OF PAINTING, SCULPTURE, ARCHITECTURE, MUSIC, THE DRAMA, AND POLITE LITERATURE.

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## WHAT WILL THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS DO WITH THEIR CHARTER?

It has always been a difficulty to us to comprehend the nature of the claim produced by this Society upon public consideration. That a certain number of artists should subscribe a certain sum each, for the purpose of purchasing the privilege of having their pictures so placed that the public might see them to advantage, we can understand to be a prudential matter of business proceeding that a Society, so formed, is perfectly justified for having contemplated and accomplished. If there were twenty more in London, the same amount of approbation should be accorded to them by us. But we do not perceive in the most remote degree, that there is any particular disinterested benefit conferred upon the country by this proceeding, more than any dealer could have assumed from having opened a shop for the sale of any other description of ware. The Gallery of British Artists has been in existence now twenty-three years; and what has it done for art beyond selling pictures? It has received a great deal of money,—what has it given away? What portion of its receipts from the public has been expended in the furtherance of anything artistic beyond the emoluments derived from the sale of the works upon its walls? It may be replied to this, and we should not be prepared to dispute the assertion, that it has had nothing to expend; that the money taken at the doors, and the money charged to non-members for being permitted to exhibit, do not, after all expenses are paid, leave a balance for other purposes. We say we are not prepared to dispute this assertion, if produced; being rather inclined to wonder that, with the generally uncrowded appearance of the rooms, the institution has so long continued in existence free from

debt. It is therefore not a matter of surprise to us that the Society of British Artists has hitherto expended nothing upon the advancement of the fine arts.

But it is a matter worthy of inquiry, why an exhibition room, that is quite equal to, indeed, we think, it might be said, better adapted for the hanging advantageously of pictures than any other, should present such a minimum of attraction to artists of a certain grade to send their works, and to the public to come and look at them? Which of us retains in his memory the image of a high class picture there hung up? Not one. Does not the simple fact itself infer that there is something constitutionally wrong in principle connected with the very construction of the Society of the British Artists? We believe there can be little doubt that some such error has been allowed to vitiate the good intended, in the first instance, not only to art itself, but to the proprietor members of this society, who have allowed their desire for profit, like vaulting ambition, to

"O'erleap itself, and fall on the other side."

Two sources of emolument have been calculated upon; the one being the entrance money obtained at the doors, the other that paid by artists, not members, for being allowed to exhibit their pictures. Now, an inquiry into the prudence of these two antagonistic measures assumes some complexity when treated largely, and all the direct and indirect motives taken into account; we will therefore anatomize their evil tendencies by consideration of each measure separately, with its apparent motives and its real consequences. That this and every other gallery should charge for the exhibition of works of art, is not a matter of choice, but of necessity. Until government itself institutes a gallery, supported by the state, pecuniary means for the purpose must be obtained either from the artists who expose, or the public who come to see. Mr. Hume and Mr. Ewart, and all the liberals in and out of parliament, not forgetting our dear friend of the *Art Union Advertiser*, may make periodical speeches, and write periodical essays upon the subject to the end of time; but they cannot shake the proposition that the means must come from some one of these three sources.

Now we will ask the public who go to an exhibition, and devote their two, three, and five hours in the examination of the variety of art submitted to them, whether the shilling that they have spent upon the occasion is ever with them a subject of regret or repentance? Is there, in fact, among all the sights of this sight-providing city, anything that comes up in cheapness to the amount of enjoyment furnished at an exhibition of paintings? Why Mulready's one picture of last year would make a small fortune if taken through England and exhibited at every town.

"But," says the liberal, "this is all very true for the classes that now frequent exhibitions; they are the classes who have shillings to spare; but we wish to render a taste for the arts universal and we would open these exhibitions, not only to all those who will pay, but also to those who will not."

Here our dear friends the liberals, not being employed in the transaction of their own affairs (in which function they are sharp fellows, and a caution in craftiness), but supposing themselves superintending a set of people who know nothing of pecuniary advantage, and care less, have left out a material consideration. The artist body is not so simple a body as the liberals suppose them to be. The artist sends his picture to an exhibition either for the chance of sale, or to gain a reputation among those who have the means of employing him. He does not greatly care about the praise or blame of those to whom the spending of a shilling is an imprudence; and it is to him no more desirable that the lower class—(meaning these who can neither purchase themselves nor influence those possessing that ability)—should criticise his production, than it would be to Howell and James to have a thoroughfare for wheelbarrows made through their emporium for enabling the mass of the community to comprehend the delicacies of a cashmere, and be cognizant of the newest fancy in a figured satin. Although we do not hesitate to grant that pecuniary advantage makes less of the motive that influences the artist to his labour than is its amount in the causes that direct the choice of almost every other; yet we are prepared to assert that there is so much of an infusion of this universal impulse in that motive, that any estimate in which it is not largely taken into account, is neither philosophical as a theory, nor true as an observation. It is not, therefore, and he knows it is not, an advantage to an artist any more than to a silk mercer, that his works should be exposed to those not caring sufficiently for art to pay the small amount charged, or not possessing the means to do so; neither is it desirable for him that those who are his clients, and whose notice he wishes to obtain, should be prevented from examining his work by the crowd of non-payers that would be consequent to the free admission to exhibitions demanded by our friends the liberals. This we say is not a consummation so devoutly to be wished, that artists should agree to pay all the expenses necessary for enabling the general public to enter these galleries gratuitously; and it is therefore the custom at all other exhibitions that no charge whatever for exposing works of art is made to their producers. The Society of British Artists has been an exception to this rule. It has charged admission to the public to see, and to the artist to be seen; the consequence has been, that few artists,

not of their own body, have continued as exhibitors in that gallery, after they were able to calculate upon a reception at any other; and the endeavour to obtain emoluments in opposite directions has lost the institution more from the public than they could possibly obtain from the artist body.

Is it an intention on the part of the Society of British Artists to abolish this tax on their brethren? If it is, their charter will have done some service, and may by possibility do more. The charge has kept many pictures above a certain quality from their rooms; for, as we have said already, there is enough of business habits, even in an artist, to tell him not to pay for a privilege that may be obtained for nothing; and Suffolk-street is considered but as a gallery to fall back upon.

We are sometimes surprised that members of this body, having a gallery of their own, to which they charge strange artists for admission, should send so many pictures as they do to be hung gratuitously at other exhibitions! We beg the liberals who are so ready to manage matters for the artist body to observe the tact with which, in this instance, they manage for themselves. The member of the British Artists sends his pictures to the British Institution; from whence, if they are hung up, a correspondence in square feet of canvas, painted by other artists, is excluded; and these excluded pictures become customers to the walls in Suffolk-street, where their producers have to pay certain sums, or are not hung at all. Thus every picture by their own members that is received by another exhibition is a direct profit to that institution. Verily, had we the superintendence of the Pall Mall, or Trafalgar Square Exhibitions, we would not hang a picture by a member of the Society of British Artists until this most obnoxious and illiberal regulation has been rescinded. Indeed, we believe that the best friend of that society could not act more directly for its interest than to agitate—agitate—agitate—for its removal. The mischief is not to be measured by the amount demanded. It is that there is a certain quantum of unpleasantness in the consciousness of having paid anything. It is a sort of acknowledgment of unworthiness in the work. It is a brand of rejection that degrades the gallery into a sort of *pis aller*, as if the stranger artists could not choose, and paid port duties in a harbour of refuge, after having been disappointed at the market to which their ware had been consigned.

There are those who whisper that the members of this society are not at all desirous of a better quality of picture being sent by non-members for exhibition; and that their own works do not lose any advantage by comparison with those with which they are now in contact;—a state of affairs too satisfactory to be jeopardised by any revolution like that we propose. Without ourselves attributing such a motive to many very clever artists belonging to the Society, we cannot shut our eyes to the conviction that presses upon us when visiting their gallery that there is very much of tact developed in the arrangement of the members' productions. Mr. Pine is a very original painter, and his pictures have many high claims upon the connoisseur; but we believe there are few painters whose works require more attention as to neighbourhood than those of that gentleman; and we never see him to such advantage as at the Suffolk Street Gallery. There is a picture by him now at the British Institution that might be passed by without remark, so much is its unobtrusive class

of excellence overshadowed by the vicinage of more violent effects. Mr. Woolmer is another artist that requires delicate treatment, and receives it.

Now we do not object to all this upon any account: for that a certain number of speculators, whether or not artists, should do what they like with their own, and give themselves the principal advantage of the building purchased with their own money is not imputable as a public wrong; neither can it be made a matter of complaint by artists who knowingly comply with the regulations enforced; but we say it distinctly, that if the Society of British Artists has gone on for twenty-three years without doing anything for art from deficiency of means, that twenty royal charters will not remove that deficiency unless it reconstructs the principles upon which its intercourse with the public has been founded.

They, nevertheless, propose to form a school of art within their walls; an enterprise of which we should never have suspected the intention but from the wording of their own memorial, which is as follows:—

"The memorialists, with the greatest confidence in your Majesty's justice, wisdom, and benevolence, venture to point to the *eminent services* the society has *already rendered* to the arts and artists of your Majesty's kingdom, and to the arduous difficulties they have so perseveringly struggled against; but especially to the important benefits that must result to many of your Majesty's subjects from the *contemplated school*, which is with great and earnest importunity humbly pressed on your Majesty's gracious notice, since, without the grant of a charter, the memorialists fear it is impossible for the society to establish the proposed school with any chance of success."

We should be glad to perceive in what manner the establishment of a school can be aided by a royal charter without the accompaniment of funds for its support? This is at present to us a complexity. It is the leading complexity; but not the only one. After establishing the school we should next be glad to know where its teachers are to come from? It is no aspersions upon the talents of the members of the Society of British Artists to say that it does not possess in itself the material for forming a school of art that would have the confidence of students if the pecuniary means were furnished. The mass of cleverness it contains is, with few exceptions, confined to landscape, and landscape may not be taught between four walls and a sky-light. We believe ourselves that we shall see an efficient school of art in Suffolk-street provided by the means of the Society and superintended by its members some time in the century after next, if we live so long.

It appears that some opposition was expected from the Royal Academy to this charter, and that a correspondence upon the subject took place between Mr. Hurlstone and Sir Martin Archer Shee. Now, while it is very difficult to understand the usefulness of a charter to this society at all, it is still more difficult to invent a motive for the Royal Academy's caring whether it had one or not. The idea of rivalry has, from the beginning, only existed in the minds of the members of the Suffolk-street Society; for the dignity of R. A. has had continuance for too long a period to be put aside by any new institution. It has, if our readers please, the illusions of long-sustained prejudice in its favour; and S.B.A. will never sound for more than second best association; and will, accordingly, only be sought for by those whose hopes do not justify their am-

bition to be admitted as members of the first and oldest institution.

We have been led to these remarks by no desire to undervalue the talents of a great portion of the members of the Society of British Artists. There are many among them excellent in their department, but, in no instance, is that department the highest; for when such quality in excellence is obtained, it goes somewhere else; and we are not of those that believe separate institutions in art advantageous. We should ourselves desire to see a gallery of such dimensions, that every picture, by every artist that had produced a work worth examination, should be seen sufficiently. We believe the grant of such a building by the state would be the best boon to art and artists. The Royal Academy now fills the space afforded to it with as few exceptive errors as any other society, however constituted; and we should like to see the entire gallery we would propose erected subjected to no worse a control. That the Members and Associates of this body should have the best places, is but asserting, as a generality, that the best pictures should be so placed that the public might contemplate their excellences more at their ease; and in a gallery of the size necessary, the productions of academicians would form so trifling a portion of the entire space, that everything might be arranged satisfactorily to the public, and to art, if not to every grade among those who elect to call themselves painters.

The *Art Union Advertiser*, as usual, has chosen to laud this step of the Suffolk-street Gallery, as something threatening to the gallery, in Trafalgar-square. There is no stronger symptom of dishonesty in an accuser than that of dealing in untranslatable innuendoes, that may be explained to anything or nothing, as may suit the Jesuitical organization by whom they have been concocted. The periodical we have named is rife with such hazy generalities; and will, in one paragraph, disperse among the uninformed mass that make the bulk of its support, an assumptive charge of corruption, that its own cowardice compels it in the next paragraph to deny:—

"Perhaps," says this sapient reformer, "this is the only instance of a body, enjoying the royal favour, and occupying, rent free, public property, successfully resisting every investigation of their affairs—every attempt to reform their constitution, in accordance with the more enlightened spirit of a more advanced age."

These are fine words, my masters, but unfortunately they have no meaning. There has been no charge yet brought against the Royal Academy that required an answer. It is the only school of high art in the kingdom, and it costs the kingdom nothing but the use of the building it occupies. If any tangible charge could be invented and properly evidenced against the Royal Academy, it possesses no privilege that guarantees impunity: and it is not a crime, *with honest men*, that a Society, necessarily composed of those who best of all understand the business they have undertaken, should refuse to call in the aid of others, who are less competent to give opinions upon the subject.

Looking at institutions generally, and remarking the impossibility of entirely repudiating the alloy of self, in any transaction in which self has interest, we cannot but admire the general working of the Royal Academy, as a body constituted to regulate itself, and presenting so many, as it were, natural advantages to the student, without



the continued necessity of direct interference. But, while we allow all this, and a great deal more, in favour of the Royal Academy, we are not prepared to say that it is perfection. We have seen nothing of that description yet, and we have been looking on at attempt in all directions for some few years; indeed, until we have given up expectation on the subject. We have, therefore, no such veneration, even for the Royal Academy, as may be a hindrance to our expression of dissent to its acts, or our protest against its details of construction. But we will not condescend to attack in generalities; we will be exact in definition; and, when we find fault, there shall be no mistake in the instance to which we refer, or the peculiarity to which we object. Indeed, we hardly know a more interesting subject to our general readers, than an analysis of the mode of instruction generally laid down in the Royal Academy, accompanied by observations on the advantages or objections to the detail of each department. This might be opportune at the present moment, when the exhibitions are approaching, and a recurrence of the annual commonplace of calumnies may be expected. In the mean time, the *quere* is still beyond our research as to—"What will the Society of British Artists do with their Charter?"

II. C. M.

#### ENGLISH SINGERS.—No. 8.

WE have now nearly gone through the entire catalogue of singers who have arrived at any degree of eminence. Our intention, in the first instance, was to have confined our notices to those who might be considered theatrical singers; and, with one or two exceptions, we have adhered to this intention; our only exceptions being Miss Dolby and Miss Birch, without whom our catalogue would not have been complete; for, though not belonging to the theatre, yet they were too well-known to be passed over in silence. Of the remainder of theatrical singers, Mr. Lefler claims the first notice, as one possessing much versatile talent. Originally educated for choir singing, he was merely to be heard at St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. Circumstances induced him subsequently to try the stage; and his first essay at the Lyceum proved him at once capable of succeeding in this career. He was subsequently engaged at Drury Lane; but latterly has confined himself to the limits of the Princess's Theatre. Mr. Lefler's voice is a barytone of good quality, not cultivated to any great extent, yet sufficiently flexible for the characters he undertakes. In anything at all serious, he fails altogether; but where the comic prevails through the part, he is always sure to perform very happily; in short, as a buffo, Mr. Lefler must be an acquisition to any company. Mr. Burdini is a singer, so little brought forward, that there is not much to say of him. He possesses a barytone voice, ranging somewhat high in the scale, consequently of no great use. He never offends by obtrusion, nor, on the other hand, produces much effect by anything he does. Apparently he is careful in studying his parts, and may always be relied on in what he undertakes. Mr. King is the second tenor at Drury Lane, with a voice of some little power, but which he contrives to stifle in the production, the consequence is, there is a thickness of sound that is somewhat unpleasant. On some occasions, in the absence of the first tenor, when put into the part, he has gone

through it very creditably; without giving any indication that he would be able at any time to undertake it so efficiently, as to be ranked as a first tenor. He might be much improved, but not under his present system of practice; and we would advise him strongly to give himself up to serious study, if ever he wishes to be more than a mere accessory.

Of the others, who are now on the stage, so short a time has elapsed since their appearance, it would not be fair to speak of them but as in a transition state. At Drury Lane we have Miss Messent, a very promising pupil of the Royal Academy, where she was taught by M. Crivelli. With a mezzo soprano voice that gains daily in power, she sings with much energy and displays considerable execution; though, at times, there is an evident straining to produce the upper notes. As an actress, she is not only pleasing, but at times graceful; her motions only requiring a little more freedom. In fact, as we have before said, she is a very promising singer, and will, no doubt, if she continues in her present career, be a favourite with the public in all the lighter operatic characters. At this theatre we have Mr. Rafter, also a promising pupil of Crivelli's, possessing a high tenor voice, with sufficient power; and capable of rising to a high rank in the profession, if not led away from those studies which he is now evidently pursuing. We say evidently, for we find improvement on each hearing which augurs that the intermediate intervals of time are not wasted. In his acting, he was at first very stiff and ungainly, but latterly he has very much overcome these early deficiencies. Mr. Rafter is one to whose future career we look forward with the hope of finding it successful.

At the Princess's theatre, we have Miss A. Romer, a young lady who has only so lately appeared that it would have been almost impossible, under ordinary circumstances, to have given any account of her at this early period; but on her very first appearance she gave indication of so much talent, that we thought ourselves justified in pronouncing at once. Subsequent hearings have not diminished our confidence in her powers; nay, we find some of our contemporaries who were at first damning her with faint praise, now loudest in eulogisms. With this we have nothing to do, for it is only our purpose to speak out in praise where it is deserved, without waiting until the whole pack are in full cry. Miss Romer has a mezzo soprano voice, executes brilliantly, shakes with perfect precision, and acts with graceful and easy deportment. Indeed, though only so short a time before the public, there has been sufficient shown to predict a successful career. We only hope that her powers will not be taxed too severely, for she is young yet to be put forward too prominently. There is another lady at this theatre, Miss Smithson, of whom we thought nothing, except that she sung out of tune; but on one occasion lately, in *Anna Boleyn*, she came out so well, that we are inclined to think that something might be made of her if under different management; we understand she is a pupil of Madame Feron's,—further comment is unnecessary. There is also a Miss Rourke, who goes through a part very nicely, and who under other tuition might, we think, do much better.

We have thus gone through a catalogue of all the singers of the day, and endeavoured to point out their exact position as artists. It is a sorrowful reflection that there is not one who can claim

a first rank. There are many good, who occasionally give promise of something better which remains unfulfilled. We have also endeavoured to show the causes which concurred in producing this state of things. There is some radical defect, which must be cured; for the English possess *fino* voices. There is as good a school in this country, if not better than elsewhere; for the first talent will generally be found where the means are most ample to reward it; and yet we have produced no one singer of any eminence. We must refer it to the principals themselves; the whole blame seems to rest on the want of study. There is far too much reliance placed on a fine voice, and on inspiration as an excuse for sheer laziness; and far too little dependence placed on that constant and unremitting industry which, however unpoetical a cause it may be reckoned to produce first-rate artists, is yet overlooked, as an unnecessary ingredient in the compound. It is melancholy to contemplate that while we can point to other artists with national pride, we cannot even show a single example of what may be considered a dramatic singer. If anything were wanting, we think this fact ought to prove how really difficult is the singing art; how little understood, how rarely undertaken and studied as it ought to be. When this truth becomes more generally known; when singing is found out to be the very difficult art it is, how many qualities are necessary to make a good artist, it will no longer be taken up merely on account of the possession of a fine voice, or as a sort of *dernier ressort* when other speculations have failed. We have several who promise well for the future, and only hope the expectation raised will not be doomed to disappointment. We for the present conclude our category, and wait until time shall have called up others under our notice; but, from the apparent dearth, we almost fear that a long period will elapse ere we shall be enabled to resume our list.

It was our intention to have included some of those now gone by, but who, in their day, held a reputation. Among the first and foremost of these stands Braham, now, indeed, no more what he was; but still, when his age is taken into consideration, occasionally bursting forth with that power that once used to electrify his audience. But we are forced to give up the task, for, on stretching our memory to the utmost, we find that even then, we only heard him when far on the wane. There is an account of this singer in the *Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, which comes down to the year 1827, at which time he was singing at Drury Lane. Some few years after he entered into the speculations of St. James's Theatre and the Colosseum; but neither of these proved fortunate, and the consequences were—his return to the profession, his trip to America, and his present continuance before the public. His voice was a tenore robusto of immense power; he did not possess a great deal of execution, and was apt, on the stage, to resort to very unartistic claptaps of shakes and roulades, to catch the applause of the gallery gods. As an actor he was lately very tame; in fact, beyond saving the air with his arms, he did nothing to give the idea of taking a part. Whatever effect he produced, was owing entirely to the truth and strength of his delivery. His conception of the reading of phrases was perfect, and he gave them with the full power of his voice, with almost electric effect. He was, perhaps, better in a concert room; for as a declaimer in recitative, he had no equal, and those who have heard

him at oratorios will not easily forget the astounding manner in which he delivered some passages, particularly in *Samson* and *Jephthah*. Now that he is on the wane, he has left no successor, no one upon whom his mantle seems likely to descend. The present generation, in comparison with him, are mere warblers; very pleasing at times; but we seldom hear any one who gives the idea of having studied as Braham must have done, to understand the full force of every sentence, and then, in applying his mind, to express, in music, the real sense of each passage. *Tempora mutantur*, and we doubt whether, now that the public ear has been so long accustomed to be cloyed with sweets, it would even appreciate the stern stuff which used to delight our progenitors. A time yet may come when sense and sound will be combined; but at present we are obliged to confess that there is too much of the *vox et preterea nihil*.

C. J.

### THE HAZARDS OF REFORM.

THERE seems to have been implanted in mankind, no doubt for the best of purposes, a disposition to go on in almost any direction towards an extreme of progress. Perfection is received by the many as an end to be accomplished only by excess in the quality in which it is desired to be obtained. As, therefore, great purposes may not be executed by other than those entirely devoted to their fulfilment, all revolutions are the work of enthusiasts, and enthusiasm never knows where to stop. The madness of reform cherishes its pet idea without reference to any other; and is often doing more injury to the cause it would sustain, by destroying, in the undue consequence given to a portion, that balance of machinery that is necessary for the regular operation of the entire department, to the perfection of which its endeavours were at first directed.

In politics, there are determined and untiring supporters provided for every section of society that possesses property to defend; and every one of those sections is employed in looking so sharply after every one of the rest, that there is little danger of a class receiving wrong, or even inconvenience, without so much of previous protest as may prevent hastiness and want of explained motive during the consideration of the change. But it may nevertheless be that the unrepresented, because unwealthy masses, are so left out of count, that in spite of all the appearance of progress of all the rest, the machinery of society, as a whole, threatens confusion; and each class at length discovers, that its individual prosperity is not quite so distinct and independent a matter, as it had at first blindly imagined, from the well-being of those with whom it is compelled to remain in contact. It then appears that perfection does not necessarily consist in extremes; and that the practical amount of advantage obtainable in anything is not within many degrees of their selfish *beau ideal* of its susceptibility.

We would apply this principle to the drama; and we believe it may be almost demonstrated, that very many of the disorders under which the stage now labours are referable to the uncalculating endeavours of those who considered themselves to be its friends towards discovering a remedy for its defects, and added charms to its attractions. The fancies of literary men, not appearing to involve what are considered the realities of life, do not call forth the same amount of im-

mediate opposition as real property transactions, in which acres of land, bank stock, or hogsheads of sugar are in dispute; and the laborious book-worm who, condensing his endeavour into a corner of inquiry, neither knows or cares for anything beyond the tiny boundary to which he is restricted, becomes such an enthusiast in the trifle that closeness of observation has exaggerated to his senses, that he would unhesitatingly sacrifice all else to its undue and often absurd aggrandizement; and to obtain the little good he sees, would risk a continent of mischief that is beyond his very limited horizon.

In all practical matters, such men are not merely useless but dangerous. The practicability of a satisfactory accomplishment, of an apparently simple operation, depends upon too many contingencies to be left entirely to theory; and foresight of general result must enter largely into the estimate, that it is necessary to consider well the increased consequence conferred upon a portion. If we examine the position of our drama at the present period, we cannot refuse assent to the remark, that this sufficiency of consideration has been neglected; and that while in one particular it is immeasurably superior to that of gone-by time, it did then surpass its present capability in every other quality.

Plays have been lately got up with a perfection of costume unknown to the periods of our early remembrance. A tragedy at Sadler's Wells is now revived with greater expense to the management than was formerly the cost at Drury Lane or Covent Garden; and such appropriateness is so generally insisted upon and attempted, that the material for one play is scarcely adaptable to the productions of another. This has been accomplished in the face of decreased prices and increased competition. There has been obtained an improvement in the picturesque ornament of the stage; the sight has been flattered by the specialities of the drama; and nourishment has been afforded to the tailor and decorator that has been withdrawn from the artist actor. The stage is gradually approaching the state of splendid imbecility; its essentials have been starved, while its accessories have received an undue nourishment. It is no reply to this statement to assert that actors now receive more than ever. We do not dispute that individual actors receive more; but we deny that any theatre pays so much to their entire staff as was formerly its amount of disbursement. The entire company of the Haymarket Theatre is often seen in one night's performance; and the consequence is, a monotonous repetition, that has destroyed the old play-going portion of the audience. The same may be said of every other theatre; and a new piece does not provide sufficient freshness of situation so to disguise the manner of the actor, that an audience shall be able to imagine they are looking and listening to something with which they have not been previously fatigued.

With unlimited means, such refinements in costume might be a *desideratum*; but when, for the inferior and mechanical, we must surrender the refined and the intellectual portion of a stage play, we repudiate the bargain, and invoke managers to return to the period when costliness of embellishments were not obstacles to variety and excellence in production.

We believe no manager has (although with the best intention) done more mischief, in this particular, than Mr. Macready, whose devotion to

Shakspeare has impelled him to squander large sums on some of his plays, for what he considered to be a representation worthy of their excellence. Thus it has happened that a season of Drury Lane Theatre has passed away with only a variety of some fifteen or twenty changes of performance. The amount disbursed in show rendered it absolutely necessary that a piece should run such a number of evenings as might, besides paying current expenses, return the money laid out. But what is the consequence of this? Your old play-goer, who formerly attended the theatres twice or thrice a-week, is no longer calculated upon. Mr. Macready's *King John*, however excellent a performance, will not attract repeatedly; and those who remember Charles Kemble's *Falconbridge* would not be delighted in seeing Mr. Anderson in the character a great many times in a season. If splendid scenery and appropriate costume are obtainable without sacrifice of that variety in performance that is the continued attraction of the play-goer, let us have them by all means; but we do not believe that their utilities are sufficient to balance such a sacrifice.

There is nothing in a playbill that seems to us a greater reproach to theatricals than that the acting of a drama by Shakspeare should be entitled a revival. All the acting plays of our great bard should be so provided for as to be considered, at all times, stock performances; and a company, at a first class theatre, should be collected with reference to their production effectively. It was so when John Kemble managed Covent Garden, and we know no good reason why it should ever be otherwise. We will not assert that artistically treated scenery and mechanical stage effects, are always objectionable in high class dramas, but we do assert that they should not be obtrusive, are never assistant to the sentiment, and that they have much less to do with development of plot than is generally supposed. Who can remember Kean's "Blood! blood! Ingo!" in conjunction with the scene beyond him when he said it. It is the essential quality of the artist actor to absorb the interest of the audience into intense contemplation of his own countenance, careless of all the finery of the decoration. Decoration is only decoratively effective when employed on something inferior to itself; and when in contact with mere physical attributes, as in the ballet, it is on an equality with its surroundings, and forms part of a combination in which it has a similarity of rank with its components. But when decoration enters into contest with the intellectual perfectness desirable in a play, when its presence prevents that succession of variety that is the sustenance of the play-going class, we say, at once away with your finery, and give us just so much as shall leave the sacrifice of anything else unnecessary.

That a new play should have a run is not among our objections, if it is a good one; but the plays of Shakspeare should take their turn with the public. Each actor should at all times be, within a week's notice, prepared; the scenery should be restricted in its mechanical effects to those that would enable their stowage in a day and their replacement in a day an operation within the means of the establishment; and the dresses of every piece should be, at all times, no farther expensive than as allowing an essential stock to be an expense that should not embarrass other necessary disbursements. This, we believe, could not be accomplished upon the present scale



of costume, decoration, and price; and, therefore, let it be so reduced that it shall not be of more injury than use to the theatre.

The mischief to the drama is not confined to the establishment where the attempt to combine these intellectual and mechanical advantages began. The extravagance in embellishment of Mr. Macready and Madame Vestris, although crippling their own resources, shortening their rule, and absorbing not only their fair calculatable profits, but restricting their engagements, set just enough of example that they become the object for imitation, not in the imprudence of their expense, but in the consequences that result from it; and the precedent they were obliged to furnish has been parodied, without any attempt to emulate the imprudence that was its cause, even to carrying that parody to the extreme of exaggeration.

Let any one examine the present company of the Haymarket Theatre, and observe the variety of character that one actor is compelled to undertake. Let him notice Hudson playing first-rates in three or four different departments; Farren walking through a variety of characters, without attempting to act any of them; Miss Julia Bennet screaming in all directions, from *Lady Teazle* to *Miss Jenny*; and almost every character acted in almost every comedy by mere repeaters of the words of parts, who would, when there were play-goers, not have been tolerated as doubles, or have been suffered to appear without apology when their principals were sick.

This, we say, arises from the dispersion of the play-going class consequent upon the interminable run of every revival, as it is called, that has been so produced as to involve an expense only to be paid for by repetition. The play-goers assemble on the first night of a new piece, which they, not unoften, damn most heartily; the manager, however, has made up his book for a run; and as he knows the present company will not think it worth their while to return to the charge the succeeding night, he tells them that "he thinks himself justified in repeating the abortion every evening till further notice." The nondescript is continued, until something else turns up that the inefficiency he superintends may attack with an equal chance of impunity; when the rickety bantling he has nursed so long is consigned for ever to that obscurity from which it should never have been roused. Here there is not the excuse of cost to justify managerial pertinacity; for there is but little expended in dresses at the Haymarket, and we see the same very dirty scenery again and again, in different plays. We do not object to this; but we object to incurring the penalty without having countenanced the error; and we protest against the unprecedented inadequacy of the existing Haymarket Company for the fair representation of English comedy. There is not one of our stock dramas that it could put upon the stage tolerably; its attempts at Shakspeare were objects of ridicule, even when assisted by starring principals; and its entire strength, withdrawing Mr. Buckstone, would be overmatched by several provincial companies, leaving Edinburgh and Dublin out of the question. It is not, then, a wonder that the drama is deteriorating when our highest priced theatre is thus miserably deficient in leading talent; and when what capability it possesses is not developed to its utmost in the line of character for which it is most efficient, but is compelled into an universality of attempt that is ruinous to individual adaptation.

Let us hope that if one of our principal theatres is again devoted to the higher class of drama, that its manager will take into account the fact that only a succession of novelty can cultivate a taste for theatrical performance; that the greatest admirers of an actor will not go again and again to see the same personation; that it is not for the advantage of the actor that the same eyes should scan his manner too often doing the same thing; and that he cannot too often vary his appearance and stage business to escape the monotony inseparable from the tautological tediousness of substituting repetition for change, when providing amusement for a class the very essence of whose enjoyment is variety.

#### THE TRUNKMAKER.

#### MR. BARRY AND THE WELLINGTON STATUE.—THE INSTITUTE AND ITS COMPETITIONS.

MR. CHARLES BARRY is undoubtedly a man of great talent. As an architect (it is our pride to say) he occupies a position, if not absolutely above rivalry, without doubt of very noble eminence. We love him none the less—perhaps all the more—when it is complained of him that he lacks the "practical" knowledge of the builder; we value his artistic skill the more purely for itself when our offensive position as to the separateness of practical housebuilding from so-called "theoretical" house-design, is borne out in his person. Mr. Barry is what we call an ARCHITECT. And, as an architect, he is, we say, a man undoubtedly of great talent.

But talented men will make a slip occasionally so long as to err is human,—genius will stoop down at a time to the level of common mind,—nay, frequently we find it that talent of the noblest will slip occasionally, even very strangely indeed—genius of the loftiest stoop down at a time to the level even of very stupid people.

Mr. Barry has done several transcendent works. But (and now we come to the point) Mr. Barry has made several egregious blunders. There was the Westminster Bridge, for instance, if what runs in our mind on the matter be correct. The principle upon which he designed his Westminster Bridge, with Tudor arches and Gothic pie-crust work was an eminently great failure of thought—an especially absurd conception of design. But this we mention merely by the way; our grievous fault with him at present lies in a different direction altogether. He has made a design (so we are informed) for a pedestal for the famous Wellington Statue; and if this design, as we conceive of it from description, were to be the matter of our judgment of Mr. Barry's talent, we are afraid we should have to say of him very hard sayings indeed. Mr. Barry is said to have proposed to remove the Duke and Copenhagen from their seat on the arch at Hyde Park Corner, to be set up in the park upon the summit of a pedestal—an orthodox base-dado-cornice-and-blocking-course-pedestal—bless the mark! *forty feet high!*

Whether Mr. Barry made this design as an exceedingly sly joke, to see how much in the way of the preposterous a sub-committee would be able to swallow; or whether Mr. Barry, approving of the present site—the seat atop of the arch—or willing to do the sub-committee a favour by keeping the Duke and Copenhagen bound thereon, quietly resolved to present as the design of the first architect of the day a proposal as perfectly

wrong as possible; or whether Mr. Barry may have proceeded on any other of many similar principles, we do not say. We are unwilling to debit him with the forty-feet pedestal as a really serious work of his honest imagination; we would rather look at it in any other light whatever. But there it is: a base-dado cornice and blocking-course forty feet high to perch that statue upon. We did not expect this of Mr. Barry.

It may be possible that Mr. Barry's view of the Duke-and-Copenhagen sculpture is the same as the latest edition of the *Punch* opinion, that the best site for it is out of sight. If so we can comprehend his principle of design,—forty feet might be tolerably well nigh the mark. But if the intention be to form a suitable pedestal for the display of a valuable work of statuary, the comprehension of his principle of design is not by any means so easy of accomplishment; forty feet flies wide of the mark of our imagination, very much indeed.

We hold the first principle of design in a pedestal for sculpture is this,—that the sculpture is to be, as the fundamental idea, shown to advantage. The pedestal is to serve the sculpture,—it has no interest apart from the interest of the sculpture,—or if it have, its interest cannot be permitted to come into play till that of the sculpture is fully served. The pedestal is the mere servant of the statue,—the architect the mere servant of the sculptor. The first question is how the statue demands to be placed,—at what elevation, for instance, to give it the greatest effect; and the pedestal must take that as a demand which cannot be interfered with. Now, leaving the architectural detail of Mr. Barry's pedestal out of account,—especially as we have no particular knowledge of it,—is forty feet the elevation demanded by the group in question for the proper display of its effect as desired? So long as the arch at Hyde Park Corner was to be the pedestal, the question of elevation might be different; but now that a new pedestal is designed, we expect it to be the exact height required for the best advantage of the sculpture. And the inquiry is whether this exact height required is just forty English feet up in the air. You may speak of it being "a matter of taste," or "a matter of opinion," as long as you please,—this is no answer to the question. To everything there is one right and ten thousand wrongs. And the right always has a reason for its right. No reason, no right. It is not "a mere matter of opinion,"—it is a matter of fact—a matter of demonstration. And that the height of forty feet up in the air is not the proper elevation for a work of sculpture such as the duke's statue we consider to be directly demonstrable,—not "a mere matter of taste," but a matter of certainty. We raise the statue on a pedestal for increase of monumental dignity. But we may raise it too far. Other principles govern. That the representation of art must follow the fact of nature is the simplest and plainest of all principles. To infringe it is to outrage the idea of representation. Dukes and horses are things that stand upon the ground. When we look at a real horse we do not behold his belly, and when we look at a real duke we do not see the soles of his boots. Nature constructed her dukes and horses to be viewed in one certain way,—and viewed otherwise, they are not beautiful. To raise the statue at all above the natural level is theoretically at variance with truth; and to increase the size above the size of life is also theoretically false; if it were not that the view

from a little distance counteracts the exaggeration—or rather lessens its effect to unobservable, the elevation of a statue and the grandeur of great size would not be allowed us at all. So that we must keep always rigidly within the bounds prescribed by this principle,—the dignity of elevation or size when pushed beyond this delicate mark becomes perching a figure on a height or representing Brobdingnag. The spectator at the proper distance for seeing the details of the sculpture must have the work so in his view as to be in the natural position, or so little elevated as to be not observably out of the natural position. Very little is all that nature will tolerate. The Duke of York and Nelson are merely perched upon long poles. And it will be always found that just as very little is all that nature will tolerate, so very little is all that dignity demands. The Duke of York and Nelson are very undignified objects up there. The Wellington statue ought thus demonstrably to be placed so that the eye at a certain distance shall be able to take in the details in the general form in a natural, or rather, not in an unnatural, position. And this we are inclined to think calculation will show to give not much more than ten feet of elevation. Wherefore we count Mr. Barry's forty feet absurd and ridiculous, for the simple reason that at such height the statue cannot be seen but as a gross distortion of nature.

If it be argued that Mr. Wyatt designed his sculpture upon the grounds of a great elevation, the case might assume another form; but if the object of Mr. Barry has been to design a pedestal for the proper advantageous display of a sculpture worth being looked at and *seen*, we are clearly of opinion that he has erred.

The Council of the Royal Institute of British Architects have at last vouchsafed to deliver their *dictum* in the matter of their premiums. It is all swaddled in a "Report," as usual,—and a Report of the usual nature—sagacious, prudent, dignified, and logical. The Royal Institute of British Architects, ever watchful of the good of good people, determined to get up competitions; doubtless to show the world (competitions being matter of very great importance at the present time) how competitions ought to be conducted. Their "instructions" were a pattern of instructions, clear, lucid, full. The sealed letter, and motto or device, and sealed envelope and direction, and all the rest of it, were a model for all future matters of the sort. And last, the Council "would not consider themselves called upon to adjudge the medal, unless the designs and drawings should be of sufficient merit to deserve that distinction," as a rule of action for all competition-employers in time to come how to provide for keeping the prize if they should happen to wish it. The royal medal and the Soane medallion are both withheld. Eleven designs for the one, and two for the other, are received; and not one is "worthy" of the prize. We may draw inferences from this. Perhaps architects under five-and-twenty are all very uninspired young gentlemen. Perhaps the influence of the Royal Institute of British Architects is very different from what it might be. Perhaps the general opinion of what would be likely to gratify the taste of Institute criticism happened to be very peculiar. Perhaps the Council do not very plainly know their own mind. Perhaps they are queer people. Perhaps a great many things. But we sympathise with the poor disappointed;

we are not at all sure of their having had fair play. If it were not that the entire idea is so richly ridiculous, in whole and in parts, in this view and that and the other, we might be able to say a good deal about it and its result. But as our candid opinion of it is that it is perfectly beneath the dignity of any respectable and respectably educated young architect to enter into the competitions and emulations of this very anile institution in any way whatever, we must let this be good and sufficient reason for dismissing the subject to the silence of insignificance.

It would appear that the Institute had got up a competition literary, in addition to their competitions artistic. They propounded the very wise theme, "The adaptation and modification of the orders of the Greeks by the Romans and moderns." Three essays were sent in. Mr. J. W. Papworth won the prize. And we must really say that this has very nearly the worst look of any transaction we have heard of for some time. Mr. Papworth is no less than a Fellow of the Institute—a man more than seven years in the business as an independent practitioner. For such a person to win such a premium is not at all to our mind. We certainly should be ashamed, were we Mr. Papworth's friend, to hear of his having carried off so paltry a prize. That is, as we understand it. For our idea was that of a school-boy competition;—the nature of the prize, a medal,—the subject, such mere namby pamby and childishness primitive-hut-and-basket-and-tile-ism,—and all else about it,—bore so strongly, so unequivocally, the mark of the school-boy;—it was a mere "theme," like the history of St. Paul, or the history of Noah, or the condition of the ancient Britons, or any other such important subject that little Master John gets from the schoolmaster to try his opening literary powers upon. And when we glance over the mass of twaddle that Mr. Papworth has thrown together in this "prize essay," our suspicions become a little aroused. With such unqualified disapprobation of everything else, how came the Council to luxuriate so much in this—and this so poor a thing? For we have not read such unmitigated old-ladyism in the architectural way for some time,—the orders, Vitruvius, super-columniation, eustyle, pseudodipteral, and hypæthral arrangements, and all the rest of it. Poor Mr. Papworth! But it is very like the Institute. K.

## THE FINE ARTS.

### THE ART OF DESIGN.

It is a matter of general complaint among all those who interfere with art, that, although we have already established a number of Schools of Design in London and the provinces, and are intending more, there does not exist in any one of them a system by which design itself is either taught or professed to be taught. This contradiction in terms has given an opportunity for much flourish on the part of some of those who, not knowing anything of the process by which works of art are accomplished, profess to know everything of the processes by which they ought to be accomplished, and who assert that art is only sluggish in progress because artists are deaf to the instruction they are so willing to bestow.

But while these *savants* are disputing about the means by which precept in design may be communicated, the question presents itself to us as not yet settled whether the talent of design, as separate from that of drawing merely, can be

communicated at all by any process of instruction whatever. To the average of men's intellect, the common routine of scholastic education, such as reading, writing, and grammatical construction, furnishes the entire essential preparation for commencing the career of a historian, a poet, or a dramatist; diversity in language make no difference, it being, in fact, nothing but a repetition of the same routine. For those three, and every other department of literature—reading, writing, and grammatical construction, with the addition, perhaps, of a little mathematics as a training to exactness in definition, are the sole preparation. Now whoever yet heard of poetry being taught in a course of lectures, or of a historian or dramatic writer taking an apprentice, to be treated as one of the family? But in art, facility of drawing the human figure with correctness, a certain amount of acquaintance with the bones and muscles, a sufficient observation of expression in the countenance, and, in lieu of mathematics, perspective, with which it has much in common, are the equivalent preparatives for design, and we have never known design to be communicated among the instructions conveyed by an artist to his pupil.

It is not without a severe consideration of this subject that we have come to the conclusion that design cannot be taught at the time when teaching would be of use, even if we possessed a teacher; but we do not possess a teacher—never did possess a teacher—and never shall possess a teacher competent to convey any more than his own motives for this and that, if, which we doubt, he at all times knows them himself.

We do not therefore assert that design has not its laws; for the opinions we have always supported in *THE FINE ARTS' JOURNAL* is, that there are laws for everything in art. But the laws in art, like the laws in jurisprudence, have more direct reference to what you may not do, than to the wide range of variety in excellence that make up beauty. Neither criminal or civil law enumerate the duties of the just man, they do but describe the boundaries of iniquity. A man may write much that shall not sin grammatically, and yet present no marked excellence in literary composition; even as a man may avoid the commission of crime without therefore being virtuous. Grammar, in literature as in art, enumerates only the faults, it has no pretensions whatever to restrict the beauties; and composition may be as perfect in a note of ten lines as in an epic poem of twenty cantos. Each may pay the same attention to orthography, etymology, and syntax, and in their individual departments be without blemish, although neither one or the other, as a composition, should present evidence of deep thought or poetic beauty.

In art it is not however so easy to escape grammatical error as in literature. Correct design is something more difficult than correct orthography; and anatomy and expression require more antecedent labour than the turning of a period, or counting the accent in blank verse; and thus it happens that so many demonstrable faults may exist in a picture, that you can never get at its composition to criticise those parts of which the principles have been less definitely laid down, or not so generally agreed upon.

To instruct young students in composition, if it were possible to do so effectively, would, we consider, be injudicious, until they had acquired the power of being correct; for it is even now too often the practice to sacrifice drawing to breadth, because the artist has not the resource of adaptation, and he sacrifices form from an incapacity to vary position. Teach young students design before their drawing education is mature, and they will never draw well at all. When they can draw well, they will not be taught; and to attempt instructions before would be like setting a boy to write a novel who had not passed pot-hooks and hangers.

The art of design is therefore not a distinct quality in art; but the result of a combined talent of acquired power in the hand to put down correctly what the mind is capable of dictating clearly. So long as correct drawing is a difficulty,



design will be in fetters: or rather so long as it is a difficulty to the artist to produce with his hand that which his mind truly conceives, the design of that artist will be to him an insufficiency. The labour of manipulation will be a clog upon fancy, and his manipular productions will not be proportionate to his mental conception. It would be of no use to instruct such an artist in design; that he is not successful proceeds from causes which such instruction would not remove.

But suppose a student to have become an accomplished draughtsman, and that he has, by long perseverance in copying antique and living models, arrived at that stage of accordance between the eye and hand that his *beau idéal* has been refined, and his anatomical knowledge has become exact; is it possible or probable, allowing that he possessed the capacity for creative talent, that composition has not been also considered, and that design has not gone on hand and hand with the rest of his pursuits? We assert that the fact of having made no endeavour towards design in that period, might be received as evidence that he did not possess the capability to excel; that his mental power to image a combination was feeble; that he was a copyist and nothing else; and that instruction would be a sacrifice of his own time and that of his instructors. We believe this holds equally true with ornamental design; the artist who has a facility in copying, who is familiar with all the forms already composed, and possesses the acquired freedom of hand to reproduce them without difficulty; and yet is not capable of so varying their combination to produce what, in ornament, are called new patterns, would, when instructed in design, only draw the forms he was told to draw, without ever independently inventing anything whatever himself.

The inventive faculty is not near so generally possessed as the crowd who pretend to it might lead us to suppose. In all the flood of literary production of the present period, are there half a dozen inventors? Is not the great bulk of published work a recapitulation of a hundred and fifty times told thoughts? Compilation is the labour of thousands, whose greatest claim upon our favour is, that they have read much, and re-written what they have read; their highest attempt having been to compare the judgments of thinkers with each other. Here is industry, but not design—labour, but not originality—analysis, but not invention. To teach design, to enable the student to accomplish a work that shall possess all these qualities, is so difficult, and demands so great an amount and so high a quality of accomplishment in him that would undertake the task, that we have yet seen no artist moot the question whose pretension has not been an impertinence.

The great schism in the Somerset House School has turned upon this question; and while we have watched the productions of the masters in that school, in the endeavour to discover meaning in their protests, we have still found ourselves at a loss to discover in them evidence of such detailed knowledge of principles as would justify the art of design being entrusted to their teaching; or, indeed, that would countenance the opinion that it is within the bounds of human capacity to lay down any other regulations on the subject than would consist in pointing out those extreme cases of error that must be avoided; and we believe, these cases are never so completely recognised as after the artist has purchased his experience by the commission of the error himself. Design or composition in art is therefore a matter of progress. It is a gradual refinement in artistic perception. It is the agreement of beauty in its abstract with utility in the object represented. It is a conventionality and a corruption when truth is sacrificed for its presence; and though, to do a great right, the perpetration of a little wrong may sometimes be justified by political necessity; yet, in art, any wrong whatever is an evidence of deficient resource, and, theoretically, an error that may not be tolerated in precept, although practically unavoidable. We know no painter sufficiently cognisant of these little wrongs, that would heartily undertake the drudgery of teaching; and

instruction from those not completely acquainted with the matter is far more likely to convey to the pupils the mannerisms of the artist, than to teach them the principles of the art.

#### ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTURAL DRAUGHTSMEN.

A GENERAL meeting of this society was held last evening, at their rooms, 33, Southampton-street, for the purpose of embodying the "School of Design" in connection with their association. After the appointment of a chairman, the secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting, which served to explain to the visitors, the part the society intended to take in assisting to carry out such a scheme. First, by the immediate reduction of their annual subscription and entrance fee to one half; secondly, the abolition of all fines; thirdly, to make all drawings to the portfolio optional; and lastly, to form classes among the members for the more perfect study of design.

After the reading of the minutes, a long discussion ensued relative to the best mode of carrying out the "School of Design;" some gentlemen present refusing to co-operate with the association until the working of the schools should be more definitely fixed. The members then generally explained that it was the object of Mr. Kerr's paper (which had been read at a previous meeting), and from which this new scheme emanated, to form a society upon an enlarged scale, with a comparatively trifling subscription, that might induce every student of the art to avail himself of its privileges; this purpose they thought had been fully carried out, by the amended rules, as read before them that evening, and that it now only remained for the profession generally to carry the scheme fully into operation, by becoming members of the association, and placing the working of the schools in some definite form. Several gentlemen then expressed their wish to have their names enrolled among the members, and were duly proposed by the secretary, and seconded by J. K. Colling, to be elected at their next meeting on the 17th instant.

A sub-committee of the association was then appointed, consisting of five members, to meet a deputation of the newly-proposed members, to arrange at once upon the actual working of the new schools.

33, Southampton-street, Strand, March 4, 1847.

#### THE ILLUSTRATING ARTISTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

EQUALLY well known with William Harvey is Kenny Meadows. They have both illustrated Shakespeare, and Meadows is as far gone in mannerism as the former artist. His manner, too, is one quite his own, and the chief characteristic of it is irregularity. It would be quite beyond our limits to enumerate a title of the works to which Kenny Meadows has contributed; his "Shakespeare" is, perhaps, the most important, and though full of examples of faulty design, it, at the same time, presents some felicitous and powerful conceptions. The task, indeed, of fully illustrating our "immortal bard," is one which no single pencil should attempt; nothing short, we are persuaded, of a combination of the highest talent could achieve the task satisfactorily to all parties.

The designs by Kenny Meadows, in some of the earlier numbers of *Punch*, though full of meaning, were so deficient in that *con amore* freedom which gives zest to comic illustrations, that they seemed somewhat out of place to our thinking. Those in the *Illustrated Magazine* were much better, as well as were his *Heads of the People* (recently republished), some of which are full of characteristic expression.

The other "popular" illustrator we may mention is John Gilbert; who, though a younger hand than either of those we have alluded to before, greatly exceeds them both in the number of his works. From the *Book of British Ballads*, to the *Mysteries of London*; from the *Illustrated*

*London News* to the *Sunday School Magazine*, all sorts of subjects, though pretty much in one style,—all come alike to John Gilbert, who would keep, we verily believe, half the wood engravers in the United Kingdom at work upon his designs alone.

This amazing facility must, we should imagine, deteriorate the value of his works most seriously, for it causes him to repeat his own designs perpetually; we don't mean *exactly*, but with so little difference as to constantly bring in mind some of his drawings which we have seen before.

Richness is the most prominent characteristic of Mr. Gilbert's works; this, united with a certain grace of outline, and a peculiar Norman cast of features, whenever he would indicate beauty, whether in a beggar or a duchess, renders his works easily distinguished from those of any other illustrator we could name.

Like the works of Harvey his landscapes are too artificial and forced in light and shade; his foliage, in particular, is fruity and mannered in the extreme.

Gilbert excels in subjects from the middle ages, where knights in armour, and powerful steeds, and darkened turrets, and "gentle dames," form the picture; or where deeds chivalric are being enacted in the camp or on the field of battle.

There are a series of historical designs on stone by the artist himself, intended for children, which are more artistic, though rather coarse in execution, than many of his more ambitious efforts.

It is a singular fact, however, that nearly all the books for children which have recently issued from the press have been most successful examples of illustration, from the *Fairy Tales* downwards. Should the rising generation, who have thus the most favourable examples always at hand, not prove greatly superior to the present in point of taste, it will be their own fault most assuredly, since the most accomplished and graceful designers of our time have not thought it beneath them to embellish the literature of "Young England."

H.

#### SOCIETY OF ARTS.

ON Wednesday last, the Society of Arts gave their first *conversazione* for the season, at their rooms, in the Adelphi, which were crowded in every part.

This exhibition of Select Specimens of British Manufactures and Decorative Art is the commencement of a series of annual exhibitions, by means of which the society hope to contribute essentially to the progress of those objects for the encouragement of which it was originally instituted. Annually the society offer premiums for works and inventions in fine arts, mechanics, and manufactures. They endeavour thus to stimulate the progress of invention and design, by producing each year new achievements which shall mark new steps towards the perfection of British art. So far the object is a good one; but it is by no means the complete fulfilment of our mission.

The first step to the improvement of an art or manufacture is the knowledge of what has already been done in that art or manufacture. To make improvements with advantage we should begin at the very summit of that perfection which has already been attained. It is for this reason that the Society of Arts have now thought it to be their duty to exhibit each year, in some departments of arts and manufactures, the degree of perfection that has already been attained. This will enable the inventor to ascertain what the degree of perfection or of imperfection is, which he has undertaken to remedy. From this point, therefore, the ingenious man will know that he must start. The practical chemist may see from our exhibition what degree of perfection the materials of decorative art have attained, what intensity, purity, or brilliance, or permanence, the arts of colouring have achieved, and what new colours or combinations he could invent to carry out the wishes of the manufacturer more perfectly. The artist may find from this exhibition that the manufacturer and the mechanic have provided for him

materials, processes, and powers of manufacture, by which his ideas may be embodied, and his compositions multiplied to an extent and with a degree of perfection never hitherto obtained. Here the ingenious mechanist may find that mechanical art has made great advances, and he may also see, from the degree of perfection exhibited, how it may be possible for him to contribute from the stores of his invention something still more perfect and complete. Thus the present exhibition may become the parent of a higher state of art and manufactures, and of a future exhibition much more perfect next year than now.

There is another object much wider in its scope even than that already stated. One great object of the society is to spread the knowledge of all that is most perfect and best in the works of our arts and manufactures as widely as possible. It is an universal complaint among manufacturers that the taste for good art does not exist in sufficient extent to reward them for the cost of producing superior works; that the public prefer the vulgar, the gaudy, the ugly even, to the beautiful and perfect; that a subject with bright colours and costly gilding is preferred to one of chaster design, symmetrical form, and subdued elegance. There is something of truth in this remark, but it is not all true. Another remark often made is that the public prefer any vulgarity, with a foreign name to it, to our native productions.

Now, these arguments are by no means universally or even generally just. In so far, however, as there is truth in them, the object of this society is to remove this cause of reproach, and to remove also this impediment to the progress of our manufactures. We are quite persuaded that the manufactures of this country can only prosper in so far as they are supported by the many, because the peculiarity of the manufactures of this country, more than abroad, is their wonderful power of multiplying. Foreigners produce an exquisite object of artistic usefulness in China or glass, but it is only one; another would cost the same sum, and that sum is such as to make it attainable only by the Emperor or the favoured few. English manufacturers, on the other hand, produce a thousand from one. What a consummate artist has designed, they can multiply by the thousand. It is only, therefore, by the appreciation of the thousands and the millions, that taste, design, and high art, applied to our manufactures, can be supported.

We want, therefore, by this exhibition, to place before the public a few selected specimens in some of the decorative arts, of what our artists, manufacturers, and machinery, have done and are doing for the advancement of their various arts to perfection. We wish to make their achievements more widely known and appreciated. We wish to show what they have done that is really good, and what might be still further improved. We are persuaded that if artistic manufactures are not appreciated, it is because they are not widely enough known. We believe that when works of high merit, of British origin, are brought forward they will be fully appreciated and thoroughly enjoyed. We believe that this exhibition, when thrown open gratuitously to all, will tend to improve the public taste. It is, therefore, proposed, after you have on these two evenings studied and appreciated this small selection of our manufactures, they shall be thrown open to all whom you think likely to be interested in or benefitted by the exhibition; and therefore you will each obtain, on application at the rooms of the society, tickets of gratuitous admission, to be placed at the disposal of every member of the society interested in diffusing sound taste, and encouraging British manufactures. We have no doubt that after the eyes of the public are familiarised with specimens of the best art, they will prefer them to subjects vulgar and gaudy; and that after a series of such annual exhibitions no manufacturer will have to complain that his best productions are left on his hands, and his worst preferred.

This selection must be regarded therefore by the meeting and the public, as instructive rather

than as striking. The collection is small but discriminative. A few branches of manufacture only and decoration have been selected; those especially in which improvements have been made or are likely and desirable. The visitors of these objects will require not to glance at them merely, but to study and examine and learn to appreciate them. These specimens are not all of the best, nor even all good, and the visitor must discriminate for himself. For the purpose of assisting in this discriminative criticism a catalogue has been printed, showing the chief peculiarities of each specimen, and also the name of the manufacturer or exhibitor.

In the branches of Pottery and Porcelain, comparing the specimens before Wedgwood's time with present productions, we cannot fail to remark the great advances made during the last half century, until we have arrived at an execution which fairly rivals the productions of Sevres and Dresden. We equal those celebrated manufactures in execution, and greatly surpass them in facility of manufacture, and therefore cheapness of production. It may almost be said that with reference to these specimens almost shillings will now produce what cost pounds in the original. The society feel that, looking to the executive skill we have already mastered, there is an entirely new field for the artist in the department of china painting; that it is time to give up imitation, and aim at original design. It is not sufficient to paint imitation Dresden and Sevres china so well that connoisseurs vouch for the copies as originals. The specimens of printing and colouring are most satisfactory, but they show that we are only on the threshold of the application of these combined processes. There can be no doubt that etchings of the highest art may be applied to china, and afterward painted with most effective excellence.

The Statuettes of Messrs. Copeland and Garrett, and Minton, in respect of *matériel*, or "body," as it is technically termed, are particularly excellent. It is very satisfactory to find these materials used in connection with designs of an artistic merit so high as that of Danecker's Ariadne and Gibson's Boy. By means of this material, it is clear that our sculptors have an opportunity for distributing works of the highest art among an unlimited number. In place of the solitary unique statue, we may have thousands of repetitions of beauty. The council rejoice to hear that arrangements are in progress for connecting the skill of our best sculptors with manufactures of this nature, and that the next exhibition will take place in this room will show works of a higher art than any which have preceded them. The beautiful material, called Parian, is equally well adapted for smaller ornaments. English china and earthenware, for its material, beauty, and excellence, is admittedly unrivalled, surpassing all similar foreign wares. We have only to add a higher character of design to stand unrivalled in all respects.

In the department of Earthenware, may be noticed with approbation the collection of mosaics, encaustic and other tiles. These productions it will be seen are susceptible of great perfection of manufacture, and are calculated to revive and extend a mode of decoration which all ages and countries have employed, and which has only fallen into neglect within the last two centuries. With the facility, precision, and cheapness which attend the present English manufacture of these tesserae, it is clear that this mode of decoration may be carried to an infinitely higher degree of perfection than has ever yet been attained, and be made to gratify and improve the tastes of *hundreds* where it formerly was confined to wealthy *individuals*.

The Pavements in the Society's Hall, in the Conservative Club in St. James's-street, in the Reform Club, in the passage of the London Coffee-house on Ludgate-hill, in the shop of Mr. Hilditch, silkmercer, also in Ludgate-hill, may be instanced as successful specimens of recent mosaic pavements. The public will soon have the opportunity of seeing Mr. Barry's employment of the encaustic tiles as a

pavement in the hall of the new House of Lords—certainly the finest specimen in this country, and probably in the world. It may be foreseen that but a few years will elapse before, not only in the halls of our public buildings, but in all places where pavements are used, these beautiful mosaics and encaustic tiles will supersede floor-cloth and naked flag-stones.

The exquisite examples of Wood Carving by Machinery speak for themselves.

The Papier Maché specimens, exhibited by Messrs. Jennens and Bettridge, display the great perfection which that article of manufacture has reached. The examples inlaid with mother o'pearl, rather than those with pictures, manifest the direction which this class of manufacture ought to take, and the singular beauty it is capable of realising. An entirely new field of decoration appears to be opened too by it.

The examples of Glass are highly promising, but though very meritorious, are only tokens of what British manufacture in glass may be able to accomplish, now that it is free from the incubus of the recently abolished excise restrictions. Messrs. Richardson's specimens of gilding and enamelling are already most commendable, as well as those by Mr. Green. It is obvious that there is a great opening to extend the principle upon which the quarry glass is made, and that it may soon become a very general substitute for the plain glass in windows.

The exhibition of Marbles shows what we are capable of executing, and that we may extend in many new directions the beautiful *Opus Sectile*, or Florentine system of ancient Mosaics.

The specimens of Ornamental Binding, exhibited by Messrs. Longman and Murray, are a welcome token that this is a department of decorative art that is exacting attention.

The specimens in Metal are very excellent as English manufacture: but we must admit that they do not equal similar productions of France and Germany. We can beat our continental neighbours in making steam engines and casting iron beams, but we have not yet approached them in ornamental metal work. The Coalbrookdale Iron Works are making a good beginning in the finer kinds of work, and a creditable specimen is shown: but we have as yet no such establishment in England as that of M. Deniere in Paris. Excepting the bronze lately produced after Mr. Bell's Eagle Slayer, for the Art Union, it was absolutely impossible to find a satisfactory specimen of a recent English bronze of high art. But we may console ourselves with remembering, that, so recently as 1834, it was complained that there was little or no trade in Paris for bronzes. There are now six thousand persons employed in this ornamental art.

The Art of Printing in Colours, either by lithography or wood blocks, must be considered but in its infancy. The specimens exhibited show satisfactory progress; and the example for paper hanging is very admirable. The society have the satisfaction to announce, that Mr. Mulready, R.A. has generously promised to co-operate in an endeavour to produce a picture to be executed by printing in colours, and they look forward to the result of the experiment with great confidence.

#### NEW SYSTEM OF ARCHITECTURE.—No. 4.

By WM. VOSE PICKETT.

HAVING, in the preceding paper, analytically referred to the form and manner in which material has been hitherto employed in the construction of iron houses, on occasions wherein any effects beyond those of bare utility have been attempted; it will now be interesting to examine into the nature of those endeavours, the object of which has been the application of iron to the extraneous and ornamental parts of buildings.

Leaving out of consideration (as irrelevant to the present inquiry) the appropriation of cast iron to the purposes of columns, entablatures, crockets, finials, and other features of the masonic arts, for which it has been applied solely as a cheaper sub-



stitute for a less durable material, we find these appropriations, with few exceptions, limited to verandahs, balconies, conservatories, and similar objects, in reference to which it must be remarked that, amidst much that is very objectionable, specimens are occasionally to be found which not only exhibit consistency with the nature of the material, but a considerable degree of positive and intrinsic beauty. In architecture, however, as in the highest order of natural existence, two descriptions of beauty are indispensable: the one is "the positive, or beauty of individual parts;" the other, and this by far the most important in respect to architecture, is "the relative beauty" of those individual parts to each other and their connection into an uniform, consistent, and "harmonious whole."

Now, it must be perfectly evident to any observer of nature that "harmonious relation of parts" is the most essential concomitant of beauty and perfection in all constructions which involve plurality and variety of parts. No one could imagine the legs of the elephant to have as good an effect if surmounted by a body proportionate to that of the race-horse or the greyhound, as by the huge and solid mass which nature designed them to sustain; or that the delicate head and neck of the giraffe, or the soft and downy wing of the ostrich could be transferred to bodies of an opposite character to their own without the most offensive results as regards "the law of proportion, fitness, and just relation of parts;" without which excellence in any complicated production can never by possibility be attained.

In respect to those useful and frequently agreeable appendages to domestic structures, termed "verandahs," it is easy to perceive that a very large amount of endeavour has been unsuccessfully made to produce harmonious effect through the junction of the discordant elements of stone and metal. If it be inquired—Why are the elements of stone and metal necessarily discordant? We reply, by reference to the distinctions inherent in their nature, which demand totally different principles and construction, and a different "order of forms in decorative design," to satisfactorily express the properties of either. "But"—it may be said—"that each of these materials might be subjected to laws of design adapted to their respective natures, and be thus combined together in a work of architecture." True, respective parts may be so combined; but where is the law that should govern the entire work, and by which alone relative beauty can be attained, to be derived from? The stone will say, "because I am the primary material of the construction, my nature shall be the law which shall control the whole;" while the metal replies, "because I am the superior material, possessing greater powers and capabilities than stone, and moreover, am employed for those features of the edifice which are most prominently presented to the view, the forms and proportions adapted to my nature shall regulate and determine the whole." And so, between the conflicting claims of the opposing elements "relative beauty," and consequently, unity in effect, is sacrificed. The prominent features in design suited to metal, and the integral parts and surfaces presenting forms and proportions adapted to stone, are therefore left to display internecine war one with the other; and, notwithstanding the innumerable occasions on which the experiment has been tried, and the partial success which may sometimes attend the production of positive beauty in individual parts, no law has yet been derived, no, nor ever can be derived, from the nature of either, or the combination of both, which can reconcile their inherent distinctions.

On reference to the best examples of "classic architecture," we find "the portico" dictating "the law" to and influencing the forms and proportions of the whole edifice; or, rather, the necessary form and integral character of the primary has determined the general character and disposition of the extraneous construction. Solid, geometric mass is exhibited in the blocks of which the wall is composed; and forms presenting geometric quantity are the harmonious characteristics of "the portico."

In like manner, "verandahs," which are synonymous in their use and prominence, should dictate or express the character of the remaining arrangements of the building of which they are made a part. This appendage, in conformity with the economy of metal, is composed of forms the reverse of those which exhibit geometric quantity; and, in obedience to the principle established in the antique arts, can become a consistent and suitable appendage to none other than constructions in which solid body or quantity is abandoned (as found indispensable in the employment of metal for the building of walls), and a form and method of arrangement derived from the example of nature in "organic structure" is adopted; or, at least, to none other than edifices which are rendered expressive of "the external forms and effects" of such principle of construction.

But, in consequence of the hitherto total absence from the commonwealth of art of any principles for, or examples of, "the systematic expression" of metallic properties in constructive and decorative architecture; whenever "verandahs" or similar metallic constructions are appended to buildings, it is customary (and, doubtless, under such circumstances is so best) to put "the metal" into harness and constrain it, as far as possible, to the general forms of the masonic building;—for, let the structure be of brick or any other material, the masonic forms are invariably adopted.

But, however expediency or necessity may be urged in defence of these practices, it is by such that the true end and purpose of art in architecture is violated. The verandah itself, as a metallic construction, is grievously impaired by the abortive attempt to render it in some measure harmonious with the remaining arrangements of the edifice. If these assume the usual form of "the square," the plan of the construction as a mass is angular and blockish: it is derived from the affinities of the quarry, not from those of the material of its composition. The incumbent support, in emulation of "the column," is objectionable; inasmuch as metal, on such occasions, needs it not. The power of suspension in this material at once does away with the utility; and consequently negatives the beauty of columns and every other description of incumbent support, save that which has its origin in the walls and primal constructions of the edifice; while, in reference to the amount, variety, and delicacy of "the interstitial forms" of the construction, (upon the judicious disposition of which the comforts and utilities as well as effect of the work is so much dependant,) the influence of the forms and general character of present buildings presents a complete barrier to almost every effort at improvement.

And after all these unworthy restrictions upon the powers of metallic material, these futile endeavours to reconcile opposing elements in nature, by the perpetration of anomalies in art, the inevitable result of the appropriation, is discordant instead of harmonious effect; for, as has just been observed, relative beauty, that indispensable concomitant of excellence, whether in constructive nature or constructive art, cannot possibly be attained by the juncture of features and parts, even though they be perfect and beautiful in themselves, unless their affinities are synonymous, and the law by which the entire work is regulated be synonymous with that by which every such part and feature is determined.

Notwithstanding, therefore, any partial success which may have attended the application of metal to constructions of this description, the effect of such introductions upon architectural excellence has been deteriorative, and in the inverse ratio; and it is lamentable to reflect, that after so much native power and effort have been expended in their appropriation, we have hitherto been destitute of any laws and examples of design whereby uniformity, consistency, and harmony in architectural purpose and effect, not in parts only, but as a whole, can through metallic agency be attained.

The cause of this failure—there can scarcely be a doubt—is attributable in a great measure to the circumstance of the study of architecture and of art

in general being pursued, historically and hypothetically, rather than philosophically. Authenticated facts, instead of the nature of elements and things, are almost universally admitted as the grounds of knowledge; and the example furnished by the actual practices of the ancients are held up as patterns for imitation, while the motives which influenced their adoption are too seldom investigated; and their suitability to the nature, whether of the original or to that of newly appropriated elements, too little inquired into.

A striking example of this is contained in "an essay," in answer to the question as to "what effects should result to architectural taste from the introduction of cast iron into architecture." A prize for which was offered and awarded by the Institute of British Architects in 1842.

The writer, in his introductory observations, appearing to entertain correct and comprehensive views, so far as the subject opens itself to him, as to what might have already been effected with this material, recognizes a vast and wide-spreading field for the exercise of invention; and expresses a conviction that the ancients, had they possessed the material now available to ourselves, would have employed it in perfect accordance with its nature and properties; just views are entertained as to the reproach attendant upon the non-progression of art in a material so largely conducive to the advancement of practical science.\* But in proceeding to examine the subject, practically, in reference to art, the mind which at first appeared free and independent, immediately exhibits its fetters. The most unlooked-for and lamentable errors are committed. It is well known, that all ancient examples of architecture we possess, or of which there is any positive and satisfactory records, are examples of marble, not of metallic appropriation; and, therefore, instead of going at once to the nature of the material itself, and examining into its capabilities—first, in reference to construction out of which beauty in architecture should issue; and secondly, in relation to design and the properties of form in general (gathering it might be, as he proceeded, some gleams of light and inspiration from the glowing descriptions of the mythic age), he looks to some few and feeble examples of tripods and garden seats, which have accidentally been preserved to us; and finding an example upon the painted walls of Pompeii, of columns represented of exceedingly reduced dimensions, and arguing therefrom, upon the fallacious presumption, that columnar arrangements (out of which definite "rules of proportion" have been made to issue), because perfectly consistent with the nature of stone, and therefore indispensable in the masonic arts, are equally indispensable in metallic constructions, concludes the essay by leaving the art in precisely the same condition as he found it; unless, indeed, a proposition to modify "the Gothic architecture," by a conjunction of iron forms and proportions with those of stone, and a consequent destruction of unity in the art, be not rather evidence of a tendency to retrograde towards corruption, instead of advancing to greater purity of style.

These remarks are by no means offered in a

\* After alluding to the general consistency of the present arts, in reference to the development of the spirit of the age and country in which, and for which, they were created, the writer proceeds—"Now, where shall we turn to find 'the beauty' born from the spirit of our age and country in the architecture of the nineteenth century?" The proposition now before us is an answer. In the nineteenth century we are in possession of a material, in extensive operation, offering us new modes of construction, new proportions, the power of creating and combining new forms and combinations, differing from everything which has preceded them in art. Since the erection of the bridge at Colebrookdale first revealed the capabilities of cast iron in construction on a large scale, science and cast iron have marched hand-in-hand with strides it is amazing to contemplate. But what has art effected with this new power? "The Institute of British Architects" are still at the inquiry "what effect shall result to architectural taste from its general introduction?" In the real adaptation of cast iron to architecture, as an art, we are much where the Dorians were, when they had placed four trunks of trees in a row with a tile upon each. After sixty or seventy years' experience, during which "a new and original style of architecture" might have been developed, we are still where the Romans may have been when they built their Cloaca Maxima.

personal or disrespectful spirit towards the unavowed author of this essay who, while throwing out these hints for those who are disposed to grope and play a little on the surface, is evidently impressed with the conviction, that were the depths of nature and art to be fully sounded, a new life in architecture would be manifested, out of the inexhaustible resources of metallic elements.

The important subject of the influence of metallic properties upon architectural forms, has long enough, in practice as well as theory, been limited to superficial observation. The instance just referred to, of the practical result of looking to the example of the ancients, in a spirit of physical imitation, rather than of metaphysical induction, is only an epitome of the general state of modern art, in reference to the nature of the elements with which it deals, or by which its condition is affected. So long as the question continues to be considered in this manner, so long will architecture, in reference to the appropriation of metals, not only remain stationary, but be in constant danger of retrograding, through the growing necessity for its introduction. Unless principles of design, based upon and arising out of the nature of principles of construction adapted to the properties of metals, be uniformly introduced, nothing satisfactory can result from the appropriation. Any endeavour to associate in the design of edifices forms and constructions fitted for metals, with forms and constructions fitted to stone, must be followed by deterioration in effect,\* because the beauty cannot issue out of the use, which resides in the peculiarity of the construction, neither from any apparent use, which a substitute material of inferior capacity might either for convenience or economy be partially admitted to represent.—For the *primal* purpose of architecture being, as observed in a former paper, to provide, on all occasions, the largest possible amount of utility, beauty, and economy in building devoted to the use of man. Art cannot be necessarily debased by the fulfilment of these purposes, even through the adaptation of substitute materials, provided they be subjected uniformly to the laws of external form by which the use of the more efficient and superior element is regulated; and so long as the legitimate effects of a legitimate art be realised, it is matter of secondary importance whether it be, at all times, through the medium of the original, or of any other appropriate and efficient physical agency.

(To be continued.)

To the Editor of THE FINE ARTS' JOURNAL.

SIR,—In reply to the observations of "A Subscriber," in your last number, I beg to say, that, in setting forth the advantages to be derived from the introduction of laws of art, adapted to the nature of metals, I have merely, on the ground of what appears to me wise policy and adaptation to present circumstances, thought fit to specify the superiority of such forms over those now used for application to brick, cement, and other commonly applied materials, and not for one moment as recommending the employment of these substitutive elements, for the attainment of any one real and inherent advantage, which may not be infinitely better attained through the appropriation of the primary material—iron.

In an art, however, such as architecture, no less than in states and empires, sudden and total revolutions in the existing order of things, although not altogether impracticable, especially when founded in truth and reason, are generally less to be desired than a wise and judicious adaptation to existing circumstances; and the propounder of the most perfect and efficient theory, who disregards the circumstances, local interests, habits, or even prejudices of society, in his immediate day, deprives that society of many immediate benefits which might otherwise accrue from the change, and will most probably retard, instead of promote,

\* It is scarcely necessary to observe, that these remarks do not relate to the application of metals for the purposes of gates, screens, and similar adjuncts in the masonic arts.

the full accomplishment of all the other advantages to be attained by the ultimate and efficient appropriation of the original means.

When the universality of masonry for public edifices, and the enormous extent to which brick is employed for every description of building, notwithstanding that we do not possess that which we might and ought to possess, namely, an art or system (however limited it must necessarily be) adapted to its nature and properties, is taken into account; and when further consideration is given to the fact of the immense absorption of our manipulative metallic resources, in the supply of the rapidly-increasing demands of our naval architecture, our railroads, our telegraphs, and innumerable other above and below ground and water purposes, for which it is already adopted, any theory or proposition which should insist on nothing less than the sudden and total discontinuance of the commonly-employed materials of architecture and building and the immediate substitution of iron, notwithstanding the number and importance of the advantages to be attained through its practical and efficient application, could not but appear, to a certain extent, at least, chimerical.

It is perfectly true that in the employment of brick instead of iron in the construction of walls, foundations, &c., the advantages of greatly economised space, better modification of temperature, superior facilities for ventilation, warming, conduct of water, smoke, gas, &c., safety from fire and electricity, increased accommodation for storage, and various domestic conveniences dependent upon hollow walls, in addition to greater durability, facility in erection, and capacity for removal and transit, must be dispensed with; as these cannot be attained in other than the primary metallic material; but, nevertheless, the advantages of suspension, instead of columnar porticoes and covered ways, of greater durability and cleanliness, throughout the entire arrangement of edifices, of greater conformity with the properties and economy of cement and plaster, as well as brick, than is offered by the present systems—together with other improvements in utility directly associative with the production of "a new and entirely distinct order of beauty," are equally capable of attainment by means of walls composed of brick and cement as in those of iron; and, therefore, if the interests, the habits, or the prejudices of society in general, or even any of its particular members, require or insist upon the continued use of brick, it is wiser to accept these instalments of benefit, rather than by forbidding such employment to assist in the perpetration of inferior utility and inferior beauty through continued indiscriminate adherence to the forms of the present systems.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WM. VOSE PICKETT.

20, Guildford-street, Feb. 27, 1847.

To the Editor of THE FINE ARTS' JOURNAL.

DEAR SIR,—Time was when England stood forth as the land where merit was rewarded wheresoever found, whether in the lofty palace of a rich and noble duke, or the lowly cottage of a poor, uneducated peasant. It is this principle that has raised England's glory, sir; it has led to the encouragement of talent in youth as well as maturer age; and it was this that enabled Inigo Jones to travel in Italy, where he first learned to appreciate architecture in lieu of painting. But, now, how sad a change! None can visit Italy save at their own expense; which, in many cases, must consist of the savings from the hardly-earned salary of a modern architect or surveyor's clerk. For this precious boon, many a luxury, many a necessary must be foregone. How magnanimous and liberal, then, sounded the offer of the R. I. B. A. of £50 to the successful competitor for her Majesty's medal for the "Encouragement of the Art and Science of Architecture;" but how small-minded and illiberal the decision that said nay! As every

\* The Architectural Royal Academy Student-ship only occurs once in nine years. Last year the gold medalist in architecture was not allowed to compete, so a painter is gone.

student knows the reasons assigned, it would be unnecessary here to repeat them; but one or other of the conditions advertised must have been infringed; either that which stipulated for a certain accommodation, or that which stipulated for a certain expenditure, and yet required a building in accordance with propriety and beauty. The author of the design, "*Quanto rectius hic qui nil molitur ineptè*," selected the stipulated sum as the one the most proper to be infringed; framed, as it must have been, on the most beggarly estimate. He was thus enabled to obtain the "individuality of expression," which was unattainable, by confining himself to the limited sum. This was the cause, evidently, of his infringement; and I cannot help thinking that he was justified. Thus much as regards the medal. Now as regards the £50. Will the "Imperial Builder" explain for what purpose students in architecture visit Italy and Greece? Is it to learn how to estimate the cost of buildings with the accuracy of a surveyor?—to take out the quantities of the Parthenon, Pantheon, and St. Peter's? or is it to improve a taste only now budding? The first it can hardly be; for a surveyor's education seems not to extend to Latin, as one of the committee (I believe a surveyor) cannot scan a common Latin hexameter, and reads *molitur* as if it were an anapest or tribrach. But the point is, have surveyors in general been in the habit of visiting Italy and Greece? When there, on what did they employ themselves? Do architects take as a companion *Lacton's Builders' Price Book* when travelling? Henceforth they may, for the Institute of British Architects has virtually declared that it is necessary. But to improve a taste only budding has hitherto been considered the object of foreign travel, and spite of this unjust decision, will remain so. Since two architects of real renown have been pleased to express their approbation of the design marked "*Quanto rectius*," and stated their opinion as to its merit and good taste, would it have been "a sad misapplication of the society's funds," to have granted £50 to its author during his study at Rome; or would it, under the circumstances before stated, have been "a public injury of a very serious character" to have awarded a medal, probably valuing ten guineas for a production of fourteen days' hard labour, and salary forfeited for that time?

Yet this is a young architect's reward;—his labour, his money, are rendered a dead letter, because rather than produce a paltry design, he hazarded the good sense of a council of the Institute of British Architects, and exceeded the limited sum, and is told for his pains that it is "a creditable attempt at monumental character," but as it cannot be built for £20,000, it must be laid aside. Indeed, "a melancholy result it is;" a result much worse than we might reasonably have expected; and perhaps next year, if the restriction shall be removed, we shall have some "fine fresh bold thoughts" from your contemporary, who will, of course, publish the proper standard to be kept in mind. If the restriction be removed, then, perhaps, "*Quanto rectius*," &c., may vanquish him (if he enter the lists) who thinks "that the want of anything like genius was so apparent that comparison" was unnecessary.

Excuse my long letter, and should it be considered worthy of insertion in your journal, I wish most heartily that it may lead young architectural students to take a warning from the result of this competition, and teach them not to compete for medals or premiums at the R. I. B. A., unless their waste of time, talent, and labour occasions no pecuniary inconvenience.

I remain, dear sir, yours very sincerely,

P.

6, Harley-street, March 2, 1847.

To the Editor of THE FINE ARTS' JOURNAL.

SIR,—A correspondent in No. IX of your valuable journal, who, from his signature, I suppose to be the secretary of the Decorative Art Society, gave your readers his opinion of the decorations of the Society of Arts' Hall. May I therefore take the



liberty of requesting you, as a favour, to lay before them the opinion of the council of the Society of Arts itself, communicated to me in the accompanying official letter from its secretary.

I remain, sir,

Your obliged and most obedient servant,

D. R. HAY.

90, George-street, Edinburgh,  
Feb. 27, 1847.

Letter from the Society of Arts, London, to Mr. D. R. Hay, Edinburgh.

"Society of Arts, Adelphi, London,  
"12th February, 1847.

"Sir,—I have the honour to communicate to you the thanks of the council of the Society of Arts, for your valuable services in the painting and decoration of their great room. They are satisfied that your labours have greatly improved the general appearance of the apartment; more especially, they are satisfied that you have done what they chiefly desired,—that you have not detracted, by your style of decoration, from the effect of the large historical paintings, by Barry, which hang on the walls; but the decoration has enhanced the effect of the paintings, and united them in one harmony.

"They have also satisfied themselves, and fortified their opinion by the evidence of eminent authorities, that you have judiciously and successfully removed from the pictures the dust and soot which formerly obscured them, without injury to the pictures themselves.

"I am therefore now desired to communicate to you their thanks for the manner in which you have fulfilled what you undertook; and as some slight acknowledgment of the esteem in which they hold your services (which so much exceed in value the amount for which you undertook the work), to request, on behalf of the society, that you will accept the accompanying copy of Mr. Barry's Etchings of his Pictures.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

"J. SCOTT RUSSELL,

"D. R. Hay, Esq.

"Secretary."

[The Editors of THE FINE ARTS' JOURNAL, persevering in the determination with which they had commenced, that of preserving their periodical from the stigma of being a mere advertisement speculation, (a reproach that has so fatally attached itself to another work pretending to the same views with their own,) do not often find themselves in the difficulty of either refusing what may be called fair discussion on the one side, or permitting something that might be considered a puff on the other. The official communication from the Society of Arts is, no doubt, highly approbatory of Mr. Hay's work; but we submit that to specific objection discussion would require specific reply; and the general opinion of any body, no matter how high in position, cannot be understood as an answer to imputed error, where such imputed error is sufficient in its definition. We should be most happy to insert Mr. Hay's objection to the objections, but we do not ourselves, without prejudicing the matter further, consider the generalities of the above letter sufficiently analytical to be a satisfactory and triumphant answer to the strictures contained in No. IX of this journal, no matter who was their author.]

To the Editor of THE FINE ARTS' JOURNAL.

SIR,—I was so forcibly struck with your remarks upon Mr. Bunn's egotism, that I cannot refrain from sending you the following:—

Being a known admirer of dramatic music, I was invited lately to hear an opera from a blind composer, named Mitchell. Every individual in a mixed assembly was enchanted, and congratulated the young man upon having produced a work that must be accepted. Judge of their astonishment when they were informed that, though the entire

opera had been pronounced (by that distinguished amateur, Sir Henry Webb, also the vocalists, Rainforth, Poole, Allen, Stretton, Burdini, besides the renowned instrumentalists, Howell, Thirlwall, Lazarus, Hill, Godfrey,) to be a work of most extraordinary merit, yet no hope was left of its being even heard by Mr. Bunn, because (though the libretto had been highly approved by Mr. W. West) it was not the offspring of Mr. Bunn's muse.

AN AMATEUR.

## THE DRAMA.

ST. JAMES'S THEATRE.—FRENCH PLAYS.—Here we have at least one theatre in which the splendour of the appointments does not subtract from the excellence of the acting. There is no blinking the matter; in the drama we are beaten hollow by our French rivals; and, what is still more unpleasant to our nationality to acknowledge, while they are every day improving, we are getting worse, worse, worse. Our actors are withering branch by branch before us, and there is no appearance, nor symptoms of appearance, that promises to replace them when they drop. With the exception of the highest class of drama, in which our neighbours have nothing to place beside Mr. Macready in some of his best personations; nor, we will add, beside Mr. Phelps, when he is happy in his selection; there is no other department of the drama in which we could compete with them with credit; and how long may we with certainty calculate upon possessing these? Mlle. Rachel is far above anything we have possessed as a tragic actress for this twenty years past; Rosa Cheri is a combination of refined excellence with which we never possessed anything comparable, nor, indeed, has France itself a pendant to her singular delicacy of conception and execution in the class of character she has created. Where have we a Volny, male or female? a Diezazet? a Doche? an Albert? a Lemaître? a Raucourt? a Bouffe? &c., &c., &c. The list of excellent French actors, of either sex, that are now in the very prime of their talent, would be much too long for the space we may devote to the subject; and why is it so long while our own is so restricted? The answer is simple—there is in Paris competition, and there is none in London. There is in Paris an accountability by managers to the public, and there is none in London. There is, as a consequence, a play-going public in Paris, and there is none in London. In Paris, the paying audience is strong enough to silence the *claqueurs*. In London the *claqueurs* silence the audience. In Paris the expenses arise from the cost of talent within the theatre. In London a very considerable portion is expended in *monstre* misrepresentations plastered upon walls outside of it. There is ten times more effort occupied in persuading the public that the parroted performances with which they are now fatigued is worthy their approbation, than would be necessary, if properly directed, to make them truly what they pretend to be.

We have now one actress, Mrs. Keeley, that we know to be first-rate in her department; and another, Miss Woolgar, whom we suspect to be first rate in hers; but who has never yet had a fair opportunity for proving her capability. In spite of puffs in periodicals, and paid-for paragraphs in newspapers, we have no first-class tragic actress whatever; for we cannot range Miss Cushman's hermaphrodite phenomena, however clever they may be, either as male or female. There is not a first-class genteel comedian upon our stage, of either sex, though we have many tolerable. We have not one old man to sustain the long list of characters with which our comedy is so rich, and we see no signs of one, unless Mr. Compton should turn his attention to that department. All is flat, stale, and unprofitable; and our entire drama is now being carried to its grave, supported upon the shoulders of three low comedians, Buckstone, Wright, and Keeley, assisted by Mr. A. Wigan, who is eccentric, and, when seen to advantage, requires to

be written for. In fact, Buckstone is now supporting, upon his individual shoulders, the entire weight of a five act play in the highest priced theatre we possess. And Wright is carrying the Adelphi, and Paul Bedford to boot, upon his back. Is it wonderful then that royalty and nobility, and learning, and refinement, repudiate the *tonjours perdrix* of one actor that is now the only attempt of our English theatres, and direct their attention to foreigners for procuring those enjoyments which their countrymen have neglected to provide. Many may reproach the sovereign for want of patriotism in thus countenancing the importation of foreign talent. But of all interference that which would control amusement is the most tyrannical. To be amused is not an internal effort of the mind, it is an operation that must be effected from without; and why our queen or our nobility should be restricted in their choice of relaxation to the English stage, while there is no effort on the part of English managers to render that stage a credit to the country, requires a greater amount of logic than we believe the whole of them to possess, if it were in their power to make it up into one parcel. Any one who observes the attention paid to the performance of the French play by our Queen and her august spouse, would see at once that there is no want of dramatic taste; no want of perception of the delicate artistic touches of the actor; no inattention during the whole performance; but such an intense absorption in the scene, as sets an example of repose and quietness to the general audience. This, be it understood, does not prejudice the hearty laugh and unaffected enjoyment of the broad joke and sly innuendo. Truly, the sovereign of the British empire, and her good-looking partner, may not be seen to greater advantage than under that absence of formality in which they exhibit themselves at the St. James's Theatre.

The stars that have succeeded Frederic Lemaître are our old acquaintance Lafont, and a new acquaintance Mlle. Fargueil, the latter being *en congé* from the Theatre du Vaudeville. This lady has every physical requisite for an actress, her features are regular, well formed, and susceptible of every delicacy of expression; and she presents, moreover, a fine and distinct intonation, a pleasant voice for delivering those snatches of song that have conferred upon the Vaudeville its title; and a finely composed figure that is always graceful in attitude. It would require a deal of very bad acting to render such personal recommendations ineffective; but Mlle. Fargueil adds, to all these, a refined study and a finished execution. Her appearance and general style reminds us sometimes much of Mrs. Sterling. There is, in her performance, a delicacy of by-play that never obtrudes, while it is always attentive to the business, that belongs to the new school of acting for which we are indebted to Mlle. Rose Cheri, than whom the stage does not possess a more safe model.

Lafont improves much upon acquaintance, and upon repeated examination, what it first appears to be absolute *insouciance*, you discover to be study that hides study; every gesture having its direct meaning, and being part of a chain of natural and suggestive indication that fully repays intensity of observation to connect. His *Maurice Durosé*, in *Un Mari que se Derange*, was an excellent personation, and, ably assisted, as he was, by that tower of strength Cartigni, Mlle. Vallee, and Mlle. Celina Fouquet, the piece was acted to the full as well as it had been done in Paris. It is, we repeat, a puzzle to us how this management can get up novelties for one night's performance, requiring scenery, decorations, and dresses, all quite new, that can never be used for anything else. In this piece the scenery was an exact counterpart of that with which it was brought out last March in the Gymnase.

OLYMPIC THEATRE.—We had become something fatigued with watching the eccentricities of this management. The successive modulations from bad to worse that signalled its progress, even at a time when theatrical affairs were so eminently

misconducted, seemed to require originality of invention for discovering the minimum of buoyancy that should sink an establishment beneath its contemporaries. While this impressed us with a species of respect for the director of the Olympic Theatre, it failed to render itself an attraction either as worthy of our praise or as of consequence enough to criticise; and it had gradually withdrawn itself from our list of duties, leaving Mr. George Bolton in an undisturbed enjoyment of the glory of being the very worst of managers in a constellation of very bad ones. But accidentally learning that Mr. J. R. Scott was to play *Shylock* at this theatre—a character for which we had opined that his talent in some sort most directly fitted him—we just dropped in, more for the purpose of measuring our own success in supposition than in the hope of receiving enjoyment from the attempts of a company so every way unworthy a metropolitan theatre. We shall, therefore, with one exception, confine ourselves to Mr. Scott; and we again repeat, that we do not know another instance of so narrow an escape from excellence; and that it is a puzzle to us to reconcile so much that is very good from so much that is intolerable in one man. We believe that the greatest injury to Mr. Scott as an actor is, that which he himself considers his principal advantage. We do not deny the advantage if advantageously managed:—

"O, it is excellent  
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous  
To use it like a giant."

This is most applicable to the stentorian powers of Mr. Scott, for he cannot resist an opportunity of exhibiting to his audience what a noise he is able to make, without exhaustion of physical power; but we shall come to this anon.

Before entering into the general merits of his acting, we would impress upon Mr. Scott the necessity of being letter-perfect in Shakespeare. He, perhaps, may not calculate upon detection in carelessness in these matters; but we will give him a list from memory of omissions made by him in the character of *Shylock*, many of them most essential to the sense and sentiment of the play. The first we forgive him. "What news on the Rialto?" being asked in the midst of a bargain is liable to objection, and might have been left out intentionally; but in—

"He rails  
Even there where merchants most do congregate  
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,  
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe  
If I forgive him!"

Mr. Scott left out the words in italics, most material to the character as a whole.

Again: in—

"What of that?  
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,  
Will furnish me; but soft, how many months  
Do you desire?—Rest you, fair, good signior."

The words in italic were also here left out, although they are referred to afterward by the Jew himself—

"I had forgot,—three months, you told me so."

Then the fine speech beginning—

"Signior Antonio, many a time and oft,"

was marred throughout by serious omissions.

"Well, then, it now appears you need my help,  
Go to then; you come to me, and you say,  
'Shylock, we would have monies; you say so;  
You who did void your rheum upon my beard,  
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur;  
Over your threshold; money is your suit,  
What should I say to you?"

All the lines in italic were left out. Again: in the same speech—

"Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;  
You spurned me such a day; another time  
You called me dog! &c."

The italics were omitted; though expressly referred to in Antonio's reply—

"To spurn thee too!"

This is pretty fair for one scene.

Again: in the famous scene between *Shylock*, *Salanio*, and *Salarino*, the whole of the following passage was skipped bodily:—

"Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons,  
subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means,  
warned and cooled by the same winter and summer as a  
Christian is!"

Also:—

"Would that my daughter were dead at my feet and the  
ducats in her coffin."

Was read—

"Would that my daughter were in her coffin and the  
ducats with her."

These are all mutilations, that not merely mar the sense of the author, but augur inefficient study in the actor. It is impossible to do justice to his own conception, whatever that may be, if any portion of the mind of the player is absorbed in the endeavour to recollect the words of his part. Therefore imperfect memory of the text, is *prima facie* evidence of carelessness, that shows incomplete preparation and a want of such sufficient estimate of the difficulties to be overcome, as would have compelled so much of necessary repetition that the words would have been mechanically at the tongue's end, and the manner would have been the sole subject for consideration.

Mr. Scott possesses power to execute anything well that he can conceive well; but he must cultivate refinement in conception. He must doubt himself everywhere, and revise attentively all his present habits. Above all things he must suspect his loudness, and rather seek for passages in which it is required than in which it may be excused. He has also a mannerism in dwelling upon the first letter even of insignificant words, and he is something injured by the slowness of pronunciation so fatal to Edwin Forrest. This causes him sometimes to add a syllable, as in "ships are but bo-ards." All these peculiarities draw the attention of the listeners from the sentiment of the part, and their feelings are dormant while their critical acumen is excited. Stage pronunciation should be no more distinct from that used in the best society, than that it should be distinctly heard, and any appearance of pedantry is a contradiction to a character that is not a pedant.

In spite of this there were passages in Mr. Scott's *Shylock* that evidenced high dramatic talent, and even these mannerisms referred to were to us less prominent than they appeared when he acted at the Princess's. The second scene with *Jessica* and *Lancelot*, in the Jew's house, was in fine keeping and very satisfactory. The third scene with *Salanio* and *Salarino*, and afterwards with *Tubal*, contained some splendid bits, which were injured by lack of variety. It had not been enough considered as a whole, and passages, in themselves excellent, injured one another by consecutiveness. There was the same throwing up of the arms in the air too often repeated, and the voice was repeatedly carried from and to the same notes in a manner that caused a monotony of progression, a sort of see-saw effect that would be easily obviated by selecting portions in which to do less. The scene was commenced in the best possible taste, and *Shylock* looked the wretched and bereaved old man. The speech, in which "let him look to his bond," is repeated three times, was most successful; but the following one was varied in success, for beside the omission, we have before referred to, it wanted breadth of effect, and might, in the artist's phrase, be called spotty. It was a Rembrandtish failure that requires some considerable attention to put to rights. The scene with *Tubal* seemed to be a trial of contrasts, and we had the loud roar of triumph in the misfortunes of Antonio alternating with the revulsive prostration, produced by the communication of his daughter's prodigality, unpleasantly telling us that the actor could do no more in the way of extreme differences, for the adverse tones of voice were, at each recurrence, exactly repeated. Between the extremes the right note is to be found, and consequently within Mr. Scott's scale. We do not pretend to say where it lies, but he may depend upon it that it does not lie in mere repetition, and that if he were a little more sparing of his lungs at times the characters would be the better for it. In a picture there is one principal light; and a scene, if not a play, to

be in keeping, ought to be regulated by a similar intention. Let then Mr. Scott reconsider the scene we allude to, let him choose himself that part of it that he believes to require the greatest prominence, and then subdue the rest to more or less of subjection to it, and his effect would be ten times as successful without near so much physical exertion. Let him study one character with reference to this observance, and we will trust to his acquired refinement for improvement in the rest.

The judgment scene was ably conceived, and well executed; there was a bold repudiation of trick that is a healthy symptom in the actor; and there was a certain amount of respect exhibited when addressing the *Doge*, that might be well imitated by some that we could mention. We have ourselves found fault with an actor for preceeding the passage—

"I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond!"

by a careful examination, as if the Jew thought so remarkable a clause might have been there without his knowledge. Mr. Scott sinned in the opposite direction, and never examined the bond at all. We think the examination should be superficial, and the reply sarcastic. The entire scene, when we take into consideration the mean support received from, with one exception, the rest of the company, was highly creditable to the actor, and fully justifies our assertion that, under favourable circumstances for its full development, he is possessed of very considerable dramatic power.

The exception alluded to above, was the *Portia* of Mrs. R. Gordon, which was a very clever performance, that could not, as a whole, be paralleled now in London. It was pleasing throughout, and sometimes very intense in sentiment, as in the speech when *Bassanio* selects the leaden casket—

"O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy;  
In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess;  
I feel too much thy blessing, make it less,  
For fear I surfeit."

This was given with great delicacy and feeling; her scenes with *Nerissa* were playful, and the celebrated speech on "the quality of mercy" obtained a round of very well-deserved applause, with which the same passage was not greeted on the two last occasions of our seeing this play. Mrs. Gordon has one habit that does her much harm; it is that of invariably dropping her voice towards the end of a sentence. Attention to the control of this peculiarity would give much of increased effect to her personations.

SURREY THEATRE.—Mr. Henry Betty has gone through a round of characters at this theatre, to very good houses. He seems to us to have much improved in study since we last saw him. There is more decided intention in the details, combined with such a conception of the whole of a character, that identifies it from the rest, and gives it consistency with itself. *Richard III.* was the play we saw him in, and we consider his scene with *Lady Anne* particularly worthy of praise. The least successful portions of his acting are those in which violence and noise predominate; and these, not because they are misconceived, but because there is a deficiency of modulation in the actor's voice, that causes a harsh recurrence to the same lower notes on all occasions. We are afraid that mischief has been done to the organ by forcing the voice too early into an artificialness of tone that has injured, if not destroyed, the middle notes of the scale, which are those upon which expression chiefly depends. If Mr. Betty can, by sparing himself, recover the power of modulating, so as to colour a phrase as he conceives it, there is very much of the artist about his present execution in other matters. Whether recoverable or no, abstaining from too frequent recurrence to that note that sounds so harshly, would be an advisable endeavour.

#### THE DRAMA OUT OF TOWN.

PROVINCIAL THEATRICALS were never in a worse condition than they are at the present moment. In whatever position the subject may be viewed the same unpropitious result will be observable;



not that the drama is in less repute—not that good acting is not appreciated, when seen—not that the public eschews amusement—nor that the managers do not try to hold out a tempting bill, but from a concatenation of events (transitory it is to be hoped) all bearing upon one common centre, that cannot but press heavily upon whatever is not essentially necessary for human existence. Theatricals, to the every-day transactions of life, stands in the same position as plum-pudding and roast beef. Both may be done without. Yet both—if comestable—are splendid adjuncts: the one as an intellectual “*bonne bouche*,” the other as a pleasing esculent, a *la-John Bull*. In both instances, under certain circumstances, powerful stimulants are absolutely required. The epicure is continually pampering his already over-pampered appetite; the which he is forced to wet, ever and anon, before he can corporally consume what he has already mentally devoured. And when the public do not feel inclined to run after theatricals, let the cause be what it may, the greater is the temptation required to induce it to foster the histrionic art. But when the commodity with which the public should be tempted, is daily decreasing in value, and consequently attraction, the chance of forcing a mental consumption, must fall off in exact proportion to the decline in the first instance. Hence it is that existing unfortunate events, acting as they do against theatricals, cannot be stayed in their onward course for the want of materials sufficiently attractive to overcome the adverse circumstances.

Provincial theatres are, with some few exceptions, but very indifferently supplied with the requisites for representing the drama in accordance with the public opinion of the present day. What a quarter of a century back would have been considered good, is now looked upon only as tolerably bad. (This does not allude to the acting, but to the appliances.) Managers are either void of taste or lack the energy to keep pace with the times by carrying out the ideas of those authors whose productions do honour to their intellect. In Shakespeare's time, scenes were imagined, so were banquets, and the fittings-up of a palace; but in 1847, a deal table, rush-bottomed chairs, and two-penny tea-things, but ill-suited with Lord Dufferin's rank and mansion. Yet managers do not or will not know better; and, instead of a triumphal arch in ancient Rome, a worn-out Temple-bar of “Tom-and-Jerry” notoriety is thrust on to gratify an enlightened audience. The drama can never be a perfect whole without the moderate aid of the sister arts. All, all, must contribute their just quota to make the delusion complete. Then companies, generally speaking, are so formed as to be as little effective as possible; they are deficient in numbers, and still more deficient in talent (not but that talent might be had by paying for it). One person playing, or, rather, going on for two or three characters in the same piece, must destroy the interest, if it does not convert the sublime into the ridiculous. But the managers are £ s. d. calculators, and only look at what they save, not what they lose by having a cheap and inefficient *corps dramatique*.

Theatres so situated, in the best of times, cannot expect to reap a plentiful harvest; how, then, must they be positioned now that the whole length and breadth of the land is suffering from a dreadful calamity? That and other events, the result of foregone conclusions deduced from the true position of most of the provincial theatres, will, for a time so militate against theatricals as to place them in that “worse” condition before alluded to; and then the “poor player,” ill-paid, and not employed more than two-thirds of his time, must suffer. May such sufferings be brief; and may a more wholesome system of provincial management emancipate the professor and the profession from the untoward position in which both are at present placed.

IPSWICH.—The business at the theatre continues moderately good, reflecting credit upon the manager for the manner in which it is conducted. On Tuesday evening last, Mr. Martin, an old and

favourite actor, but who for some time past has been living in *otium cum dignitate*, played *Zekiel Homespun* and *Joe Standfast*, for the benefit of Mr. Canham, when the house was well attended.

The following theatres will close before Easter, without the chance of others opening to give employment to the many who will be at liberty.—Southampton, Salisbury, Canterbury, Ipswich, Coventry, Glasgow, Rochdale, Aberdeen, Exeter, and Woolwich. Sheffield and Brighton have just closed; and the Queen's, Manchester, cannot reopen at present, in consequence of the license having been bought up by the T. R. Manager.

Mrs. Butler (Fanny Kemble) is engaged at the Princess's, at something more than £50 per night. She will appear the first week in May.

EDINBURGH.—Helen Faucit commenced a ten nights' engagement at the Theatre Royal on the 20th ultimo, appearing as *Julia* in the *Hunchback*; and playing *Isabella* in the *Fatal Marriage*; and *Pauline* on the Monday and Tuesday following. As Miss Faucit is one of the few attractive stars in *Auld Reikie*, the theatre was well attended on the nights of her performing. It is to be regretted, that this once stronghold of the drama, should in any way be falling off; but each change in the *corps dramatique*, is to the injury of the establishment. Edmund Glover, without being highly gifted, suits, from the round of characters he personates, the audience. Lloyd is assuredly a low comedian of talent. Mr. Howard knows his profession, but 'tis a pity we should ever grow old; and all men have not the briskeness of champagne, when they have passed their *climacteric*. Loraine, who has just been added to the company, is deficient in bearing; the *Thouans Cliffords* and *Villeroys* require grace and eloquence; still, with attention, he may improve. Miss Nicol sustains the old ladies with considerable effect. Miss Vivash is useful; and Mrs. Tellet plays everything with some skill.

GLASGOW.—Miss H. Faucit returns for a few nights to the Royal; since the termination of her first engagement, the business has been extremely bad. In three weeks the season will be at an end.

Macready has been playing at the Adelphi, the prices being advanced from threepence to sixpence to the gallery, and in like proportion to the other parts of the theatre; yet the patronage bestowed upon the establishment was not overpowering. It is supposed the manager will be minus by the speculation. Indeed the genuine box people will not visit the Adelphi, and its usual audience prefer blue-fire spectacles to the legitimate.

ABERDEEN.—Graham, from the Manchester Theatre-Royal, played *Werner* on Monday last, being the first night of his limited engagement. Of course he was well received—not because he was a better actor than Mr. James Bennett (the stock leading man)—but because his name was in large letters in the bills. We did hope better things of a management which at its onset promised to uphold the purity of the drama. If stars are to be indulged in, let none but brilliant luminaries be called into use. Minor stars injure the regular company, without adding to the reputation or the treasury of the establishment. As this is the first time we have had occasion to find fault with the management, let us trust it will be the last.

DUBLIN.—Anna Bishop terminated her engagement on the 25th of February, playing in detached acts from three operas. She and the African Roscins divided the laurels of the week between them. Neither of them drew overflowing houses, yet both were moderately patronised. On Monday last the *Back Doctor* was produced, the Roscins sustaining the *Doctor*, supported by Mrs. Ternan, Mrs. Archbold, Baker, H. Bland, F. Cooke, and J. Penson. It was highly successful, and bids fair to become a lasting favourite.

We have received numerous opinions upon Mrs. Butler's success, but as we shall have the opportunity of witnessing that lady's performance in London, we shall reserve any remarks until we can make them from our own observations.

## MUSIC.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—It would appear that opposition has aroused the energies not only of the manager, but of the whole company, to exert themselves to the utmost on the present occasion, when so formidable a rival is in the field. We have had it in our power to speak favourably of the performance of *La Favorita*; we have now an additional pleasure in bestowing our meed of praise on that of *Nino*. Of the music of Verdi, it has, perhaps with some truth, been observed, that when one opera has been heard, you have heard all. Though this may be the case, it does not follow that the one idea of the composer is not a good one; though he have but one form of combination, that one form may be very pleasing, if not too often thrust upon us. We should not like to hear a succession of the works of Verdi, it would become as tedious to us as the monotonous style of the *Princess Anna Comnena*, her history; although an opera of the one, or a page or two of the other, now and then might be an agreeable variety. The principal charm of Verdi is simplicity. He does not aim at elaborate involutions, dealing perhaps a little too much in unisonous writing; but this is capable of producing very fine effect: as, for instance, in one of the chorusses of this *Nino* which was encored when first heard last year, and now receives the same token of approbation. The fault of Verdi is, that of the day; a most outrageous predilection for the use of the brass instruments. It would appear that a composer of the present day, when at a loss for an idea, makes up the deficiency with a nice little bit of a bray on the trombone or the ophicleide; just the same as a painter, when lacking the conception to fill his canvass, makes up with a gorgeous display of red and blue drapery. The trombone is a solemn instrument, capable of tremendous effect, when used with discretion; but unfitted for the ordinary run of operatic musical phrases. The ophicleide, as far as we can hear, is only another name for a noise—perhaps good at times, but not fitted for indiscriminate use; yet these are the instruments which are mostly heard in modern operas. There are some charming little pieces in *Nino*; but, as a whole, it is heavy, and requires very good performers to carry it through well. It has this advantage now; and, accordingly, the opera has taken. Last year the character of *Nino* was represented by Fornasari, this year by Coletti; the difference is as far as the poles asunder—not only in one, but everything; a finer, fuller voice—a purer, better style—more feeling, and a dignified bearing in his action, that Fornasari had no notion of. We congratulate Mr. Lumley on this acquisition. M. Bouché improves on acquaintance: we were much pleased with him in *La Favorita*, and he was equally good in the opera of *Nino*. There is also no comparison to be made between him and its former representative, M. Botelli. Signor Corelli retains the part he took last year. He has a good voice, and we wish he would make good use of it. As it is, his presence is only a prelude to something disagreeable both in singing and acting.

We have, on a former occasion, spoken of the improvement made by Sanchioli since last year. As *Abigail* in this opera, the character she sustained last season, she has quite astonished us. Not gifted in any remarkable manner by nature, either as regards voice or figure, she now displays what can be done by study and reflection. She is no longer the same. Last season we only remember her as harsh in her singing, angular in her acting. She has now made herself an artist. Would that our singers would look to her as an example! A Mlle. Fagiani took the part of *Fenena*. She possesses a soprano voice, at present very weak; indeed, almost infantine in quality, but sings nicely, and was encored in the concluding scene of the opera. As a whole, the performance was very good indeed; whether we allude to the principal singers (with one exception), the chorus or the band; but, no, we cannot speak without qualification of the last. As far as precision in playing, Mr. Balfe deserves credit for his con-

ducting. We only wish to save our ears from the infliction of noise. Music, we really thought, was something. The poet says—

"Music has charms to soothe the savage breast."

If the said poet had heard the band during this opera, he would have paused ere he had penned that line, and might have changed the meaning, by substituting, making savage for soothing. Mr. Balfe's ears may be tough, we only hope he will spare those of his audience.

**DRURY LANE.**—The opera of *Matilda* has kept its ground, the only change being the substitution of Miss Rufforth for Miss Romer, in the part of the *Queen*, a change very satisfactory to us personally, inasmuch, as it became latterly quite painful to hear Miss Romer's efforts. We prefer Miss Rufforth in this part, in every way—she only lacks power—and it was quite a treat to hear the dialogue spoken without ranting. Mr. Harrison is a really meritorious artist, he improves at each hearing. In the dialogue too he is infinitely better than he was. We will give him a hint, which, perhaps, may be useful to him. In producing the tones of the voice, the sound when made, does not come out at once, but strikes against the back of the mouth, and then rebounds along the roof, for the larynx is not straight in the throat, but has a slight tendency backwards. In singing, Mr. Harrison's difficulty commences about the F and G, ascending the scale; this difficulty would in a great degree be overcome by attending to this back direction of the voice. Instead of forcing the sounds, the larynx should be left free to its natural motion, and the sounds would then strike as they ought, against the back part, and must be produced necessarily more freely; for any tendency to contracting the muscles would be prevented. The lower notes will also be materially increased in power, by paying attention to this natural action. We will give Mr. Corradi a hint also, namely, to use less breath in producing the tones; and in walking, it is more conducive to graceful motion, if the toes are pointed down, not up. We are in the humour for giving hints; Mr. Weiss would be the better if he learnt to do something with his hands. And Miss Isaacs will have to learn that singing a ballad merely, does not constitute an artist.

The music of the opera is certainly not of first-rate character; although there is some clever instrumentation, and occasionally very happy effects produced by the use of the wind instruments. The composer has no doubt been sacrificed to the libretto, for, as a contemporary justly observes, Mr. Bunn writes for the scene painter, not the composer, and makes everything subservient to mere scenic display. We also observe, that Mr. Bunn is very fond of noises behind the scenes, shouts and bangings, and all that sort of thing. We only hope he will take the hint himself, and confine his librettos altogether behind the scenes, for their production before is a terrible infliction on public patience.

A new ballet, called *Spanish Gallantries*, was produced on Thursday night. It is a prettily got up thing, in two acts, with two tableaux in each. Of course Mlle. Baderna did her best, to give some idea of what was going on, as did all the rest; but we must confess we never understood a ballet. Our readers must forgive us if we cannot undertake to read the book.

#### CONCERTS.

The gradual increase in the number of concerts is a sort of prelude to the coming season. On Monday, Mr. Mangold gave one at the Hanover Square Rooms. The programme included a septett by Hammel; a quintett of Mozart's; and a quartet of Mendelssohn's; besides Mr. Mangold himself, who is a very efficient piano player. There were Messrs. Sainton, Hill, Rousselot, Howell, Clinton, Keating, Harper, Boose, Nicholson, and Jazzet. The vocalists were Miss Lincoln, Miss Sara Flower, and Madame Mortier de Fontaine. The room was very well filled. The Society of British Musicians gave a *soirée* on Wednesday evening, for the benefit of the distressed Irish; there were 70 performers in the orchestra, Mr. Thirlwall being

the leader; Mr. Sterndale Bennett the conductor, Mr. Holmes, on the piano, and Mr. Wells, flute. were the solo performers; the principal vocalists, Miss Dolby, Miss Bassano, Miss Leekey, the Misses Williams; Messrs. Lockey, Burdini, and Braham. The public responded to this praiseworthy call on their generosity.—Mr. Lucas gave his second concert at his residence, 54, Berner's-street, on Thursday evening. Messrs. Sainton, Blagrove, and Hill assisted him in the performance, which included quartetts of Haydn, Mozart, B. Romberg, and Beethoven.

**NEXT WEEK'S DOINGS.**—The Beethoven Quartett Society commences their season on Monday, the 8th, at the Beethoven Rooms, 76, Harley-street, Cavendish-square.—Mr. Hullah has his third Historical Concert on the same evening at Exeter Hall.—On Wednesday evening the Ancient Concerts begin.—On Thursday there will be an extra night at her Majesty's Theatre, on which occasion Castellan makes her first appearance this season.—The Ethiopian Serenaders, at the St. James's, and Henry Russell, at the Strand theatre, continue their career. In short everything indicates the coming of the musical spring.

#### REVIEW.

*The Comic History of England.* Part IX. By G. A. BECKETT.

THIS is the first part we have seen of this periodical publication, the intention of which appears to be to blend amusement with instruction. We much question whether it will succeed in this; for a long joke, as the *History of England* must be, to run through, will, we are inclined to think, turn out a very heavy lumbering affair before even the half-way house is reached. There is no short cut to knowledge, and the garb in which it is naturally clothed being rather of a sombre character, if those who wish to acquire it are not content with it as it is, we doubt whether any artificial style of dress would be likely to allure them into it. It is all very well promising a boy a sight of *Punch*, once-and-away, if he has said his lesson well; but he would get very tired of *Punch* himself, if presented to him on all occasions, and beg for the dry book again as a relief.

In glancing over the number, we do not mean to deny that some useful hints are not occasionally thrust in, giving, perhaps, the real reading to some events, and showing the fallacy of others which have hitherto passed current, of which we give the following as a specimen, about the old story of the drowning of Clarence in the Malmsey butt:—

"His execution was never publicly carried out, and rumour has accordingly been left to run riot among the thousand ways in which Clarence might have undergone his capital punishment. The usual mode of accounting for his death is by the suggestion, that his brothers left the matter to his own choice, and that he preferred drowning in a butt of Malmsey wine to any other fatal penalty. The only objection to this arrangement appears to be, that which occurred to an English king in modern times, when he wondered how the apple got into the dumpling. However capacious the butt may have been in which Clarence desired to be drowned, it is obvious that he could never have entered the cask through its only aperture—the bung-hole. When we witness the marvel of an individual getting into a quart bottle, we shall begin to have faith in the story that Clarence met his death in the manner alluded to. If the wine was already in the cask before Clarence was immersed, there could have been no admission, even on business, except through the bung-hole; and it is not likely that the vessel could have been empty before the duke took his place for the purpose of undergoing his vinous shower-bath."

Now, we venture to suggest, in favour of the original reading, that probably the top was knocked out, in which case the butt would have presented the same inviting appearance for the immersion of Clarence, headforemost, as the water-butts of our day, when gaping open-mouthed for the welcome streams from the pendant spout; this would do away with the

bung-hole theory, which we are disposed to admit is untenable.

*History of England.* Portable edition. Mackenzie Fleet-street.

If the world in the present day does not grow very wise, it is entirely its own fault—everything now is dished up so as to try to suit every palate. History, instead being, as of old, only to be found in ponderous repulsive tomes, is presented in every inviting shape, until at length, like turtle-soup, it is pressed into a portable form, ready for all occasions and climes. This edition may be useful, like a lawyer's fee, as a refresher; the only difference being considerably in its favour, that of cheapness, we have to thank Mr. Hume for the coin.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

##### ROSSINI.

There is related, in reference to the marvellous facility of composition possessed by this artist, an anecdote which, while it is not generally known, does honour both to his talent and his individual worth.

In 1833, on a fine day in autumn, Rossini was sauntering on the Boulevards, when he met an Italian singer, named Fabiani, whose age had scarcely passed thirty years, but whose stamina had been ruined by intemperance. Rossini had formerly been acquainted with this unfortunate at Naples, where he was then second tenor.

"Oh, Maestro!" cried Fabiani, "have compassion on me; I am entirely destitute, and without the means of returning home."

"How is that, you knave, and with your voice?"

"Lost, gone, for ever."

"That is your dissipation, your drunkenness. If you would be a singer, you must be sober, and drink water sugared. But, let us see—how much do you want to go home?"

"Oh! a great deal, signor."

"How much, I say?"

"Five hundred francs."

"The deuce!" said Rossini; "I have not calculated upon withdrawing so much from my banker;—that would be inconvenient. Never mind, Fabiani, call upon me to-morrow; don't forget."

The Italian made a profound bow and ran delighted to his lodgings, while Rossini entered pensively the shop of his publisher.

"Monsieur Rossini," said the latter to him, "I have a favour to beg of you."

"A favour? Well! Let us hear. What is it?"

"I want a dozen ballads. Are you inclined to compose them for me?"

"Twelve ballads, my dear sir!" said Rossini. "Indeed! It is an entire album that you would propose. I cannot do it. I am not in the humour to work, and I won't work; that's flat."

"What I am asking," replied the editor, "is not work for you; a mere bagatelle. I only desire that you will think a little, and then write the first thing that comes into your head."

"We will see, we will see," said Rossini.

"I have only one word to add," recommended the publisher; "I will pay upon the spot for your twelve ballads, without reading them, twelve thousand francs."

"No," replied the obstinate composer.

Then, thinking better of it he said:—

"Very well; be it so. Twelve thousand francs. It is agreed upon," and Rossini, taking his hat, left the shop and walked rapidly away. At some paces from the door he met Lablache.

"Good morning, Maestro," said the celebrated basso.

"Good morning, Lablache. Will you go with me to the Theatre Italien?"

"Willingly."

The two friends continued their route together. Rossini absorbed in thought, described continual zigzags in their progress that highly amused his companion. Seated in the drawing room of



Severin, then the director of the Opera Italien, Rossini saw upon the table an album in which he had formerly written a ballad.

"How comes it, Maestro," said Lablache, "that you have not published this *morceau*?"

"I composed it for Malibran, for this album was hers, and I have not thought of it since. But you have furnished me with an idea. My publisher wants twelve ballads; now if I give him all those that I have written in the albums of my friends—"

"You will do very well; but the difficulty is to find these stray manuscripts," said Lablache.

"Why stray?" asked the composer.

"Without doubt they are to be found in Germany, in England, and in Italy, and every where else," replied Lablache, "for you have friends in all parts of the globe."

Rossini passed, smilingly, the feathery end of the pen that he held in his hand across the good-humoured countenance of his flatterer and replied—

"I have no need of the original manuscripts, for everything I have written I remember. Wait, and you shall see;" and immediately spreading the music paper before him he commenced writing rapidly, in presence of Lablache, who looked on in astonishment, the twelve ballads entitled *Soirées Musicales*, which are even at this period so popular.

That very evening the gratified publisher, full of gratitude, paid to Rossini the twelve thousand francs agreed upon.

On the day after the Italian, Fabiani, related to the passengers in the diligence for Marseilles, that one of his countrymen had given to him, a poor Italian, a very large sum to enable him to return to the land of his nativity; and when one of the travellers asked him the name of his benefactor, the ancient tenor replied, with a *naïveté*, peculiar to his country—

"I may not tell you, M. Rossini has forbidden me."

In a former number of THE FINE ARTS' JOURNAL, we detailed the extraordinary conduct of His Majesty of Bavaria, in reference to the danseuse Lola Montes. The proceeding has given rise to the following:—

**BAVARIAN SCANDAL.**—The *National* quotes the following letter, dated Munich, the 16th ult.:—"The city of Munich has been in a state of consternation, for the last two months, on account of inexplicable and constantly increasing favour of the celebrated Lola Montes. She has become the channel of all the graces and disgraces. But this is not all. More fortunate than Lord Normanby at Paris, she has succeeded in overturning the ministry, because of its opposition to her being appointed Countess de Starenberg, and presented, by the king, with one of the finest estates of the crown. Count de Bray, minister for foreign affairs, had tendered his resignation sooner than countersign a rescript, which appeared to him unworthy of the king, and his colleagues have followed his example. The king accepted some of those resignations and rejected others. He has sent Count de Bray, *en congé* to Naples, but everybody wonders at the alacrity with which he accepted the resignation of M. Abel, the minister of the interior, who was during so many years his favourite and most devoted minister. God knows how all this will end. The Dubarrys are now out of fashion. The people are irritated, and the nobility displeased. The king is openly stated to be insane, and several persons insist on the necessity of interdicting him and appointing the Prince Royal regent of the kingdom."

**JENNY LIND AND THE STUDENTS.**—At a certain German town last autumn there was a tremendous *furor* about Jenny Lind, who, after driving the whole place mad, left it on her travels early one morning. The moment her carriage was outside the gates, a pack of rampant students, who had escorted it, rushed back to the inn, demanded to be shown Jenny's bedroom, and swept like a whirlwind up stairs into the room indicated to them, tore up the sheets, and wore them in stripes as decorations. An hour or two

afterwards, a bald old gentleman of amiable appearance, an Englishman, who was staying in the hotel, came to breakfast at the *table d'hôte*, and was observed to be much disturbed in his mind, and to show great terror whenever a student came near him. At last he said in a low voice to some who came near him at table, "You are English, gentlemen, I observe. Most extraordinary people these German students; as a body raving mad, gentlemen." "Oh, no," said somebody, "only excitable, but very good fellows and very sensible." "By heavens, sir!" returned the old gentleman, still more disturbed, "then there's something political in it, and I am a marked man. I went out for a little walk this morning after shaving, and while I was gone," he fell into a terrible perspiration as he told it, "they burst into my bedroom, tore up my sheets, and are now patrolling the town, in all directions, with bits of 'em in their button-holes." In the confusion the students had gone into the wrong room.

**COVENT-GARDEN OPERA.**—This theatre is proceeding rapidly. The decorations, we believe, are to be like those of the St. James's Theatre, white and gold merely, excepting the ceiling, which is however entrusted, along with the drop, to two foreign artists, Signors Ferri and Verardi; the only portion of artist's work to be done in England being the proscenium, now in the hands of Mr. Aglio. Have the discontents that followed the much praised failure of the opera made such an impression upon the Covent-Garden management that they doubted the capability of Englishmen to decorate their own theatre? We do not here allude to Mr. Aglio, half a century of residence establishes a denizen in any country, but we have not yet seen anything in the way of pictorial decoration in a French play-house that would justify the sending for foreign artists to paint the ceiling of an English theatre. Referring to this in the mildest form, we question greatly both its prudence and its good taste. But we shall see.

**COLOSSAL CANDELABRUM.**—Among the sights of London during the last few weeks, has been the crystal cut glass candelabrum manufactured by Messrs. Osler, of Oxford-street, for Ibrahim Pacha. Looked at as an enormity in the glass department of ornamental art it is without a parallel; as being composed, to all appearance, of the purest crystal merely; the means by which the number of pieces, of which it is formed, have been attached together not presenting themselves anywhere to the observer. Its height is twelve feet, and its weight one ton; containing accommodation, in branches or arms, for twenty-four lights. It is not easy to imagine the capability of effect in the whole without seeing it lit up; neither can it be entirely guessed at as a daylight decoration in the position in which it is now placed in Messrs. Osler's warehouse, and surrounded by such a variety of elegance in the same department of production. It is nevertheless a noble piece of furniture; and is, also, we have no doubt, a precursor of a series of magnificence of the same fabric, that will increase, in refinement, as the knowledge of the individual laws of the material progresses. We have some suspicion that this form, although elegant in itself, had too much in common with bronze or metal, generally, to be the true representation of the order of crystalline capabilities. This is, however, something hypercritical in the present stage of glass manufacture, and is thrown out rather as a hint than as a stricture. Messrs. Osler are very accommodating to the public in allowing the examination of this production to inquiry; and those, who are curious in autographs, may see the hand-writing of a wide circle of aristocratic and other celebrities, in the book in which the visitors sign their names.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. B. (Stafford.) It would be impossible to advise without a hearing; but if J. B. wishes we will communicate privately with him on the subject.

RECEIVED.—The *Black Prophet*, by William Carleton.—The *Life of Garden, Architect*.

#### ADVERTISEMENTS.

**PHOTOGRAPHIC MINIATURES.**—214, Regent-street.—Mr. KILHURN begs the favour of an inspection of these MINIATURES, which are an IMPORTANT IMPROVEMENT upon the Daguerreotype Portraits.

The likeness taken by the Photographic process serves merely as a sketch for the miniature, which is painted by M. MANNION, whose productions on ivory are so celebrated in Paris. They have, when finished, all the delicacy of an elaborate miniature, with the infallible accuracy of expression only attainable by the Photographic process. Licensed by the Patentee.

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R. A. SPRIGG, Library of Fine Arts, 106, Great Russell Street, Bedford Square, London.

#### SOCIETY OF ARTS.

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H. R. H. PRINCE ALBERT, D.C.L., F.R.S., &c.

1. PREMIUMS for Works of Merit in DECORATIVE ART and MANUFACTURES to be delivered on or before the 5th of May 1847.—A List of the subjects for which Premiums amounting to 300 Guineas, with 40 Medals, are offered will be sent by post to all persons who furnish their names to the Society's House, John-street, Adelphi, London.

2. An EXHIBITION of Select Specimens of RECENT BRITISH MANUFACTURES is about to be opened in the Society's House. Cards of free admission may be obtained from Members, or the Secretary.

3. NATIONAL GALLERY OF BRITISH ART to be formed by public voluntary contribution. Details of this plan may be had on application as above directed. The EXHIBITION OF PICTURES in aid of this object will take place in June.

**ELOCUTION.**—MRS. BUTLER, widow of the late celebrated Tragedian and Lecturer, Samuel Butler, receives Ladies and Gentlemen, on alternate days, for Lessons in Elocution, Shakspearian and Miltonian Readings, elegance and grace of deportment for the Bar, the Senate, the Pulpit, and the Stage.

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### AN ORGAN,

of extensive compass, has been expressly erected in the Theatre by Messrs. Flight and Son. The Scenery by Messrs. Grieve and Telbin. Post and Translator of the Libretti, Signor Maggioni. Première Artiste Costumière, Mrs. E. Bailey.

### THE BALLET.

of a brilliant and costly character, will close the performance of the evening, and no divertissement will be suffered between the acts of operas. The Director has the pleasure to announce that he has concluded an engagement with Mademoiselle FANNY ELSSLER; and during the season the following eminent danseuses will appear:—Premières Danseuses: Mdle. DUMILATRE (of the Grand Opera, Paris), and Mdle. PLUNKETT (of the Grand Opera, Paris), Mdle. BERTIN (of the Imperial Theatre, Vienna, her first appearance in this country), Mdle. NEODOT (of the Theatre Royal, Madrid), Mdle. MARIETTA BADERNA (of the Theatre La Scala, Milan), and Mdle. FUOCO (of the Académie Royal de Paris). Mons. PETIPA (of the Grand Opera, Paris), Mons. GONTIE (of the Theatre Royal, Madrid), Mons. Ferdinando Croce, Mons. DELFERIER (of the Grand Opera, Paris), and Mons. AUGUSTE MABILLE (of the Grand Opera, Paris), Mdle. Auriol, Mdle. De Melisse, Mdle. Celeste Stephan, Mdle. Delechaux, Mdle. Levallois, Mdle. Duval, Mdle. Rita Pereda, Mdle. Arnal, Mdle. Anna Monroy, Miss Genge, Miss Hartley, Miss Barnett, Miss Kendall, Miss Rose Cohen, Miss Laura Maurice, Miss Chester, Miss Marsten, Miss L. Paris, Miss C. Paris, Miss Maskell, Miss Lee, Miss Kirby, Miss E. Clair, Miss Brown, Miss R. Wright, Miss Clifford, Miss Ward, with a numerous body of Coryphées and Figurantes. Maitres des Ballets: Mons. ALBERT (of the Grand Opera Paris), and Mons. BLASIS (of the Theatre La Scala, Milan). Leader of the Ballet: Mr. Alfred Mellon. Regisseur de la Danse: Mr. O'Bryan. Composer: Signor Alessandro Curni (of the San Carlo Theatre, Naples).

### THE THEATRE.

To render the Interior at once commodious, elegant, and comfortable, it has been entirely reconstructed and decorated under the immediate decoration and after designs of B. ALBANO, Esq., C.E., with every attention directed to its proper ventilation. The Decorations have been executed by Mr. Ponsobly. The Management has happily secured the artistic skill of Signori Ferri and Verardi (of the Théâtre Italien, in Paris), to embellish the ceiling and to prepare a New Drop Scene. The Prosecution has been entrusted to Mr. Aglio. The approaches to the theatre will be found improved, by a carriage way being formed immediately under the Portico in Bow-street, whereby parties can leave or enter their carriages without exposure to the weather; and by increased facilities for ingress and egress. The Refreshment Room will be under the superintendence of Mr. J. G. Watson.

Tickets, Stalls, or Boxes, for the night or season, to be obtained at the Box-office, Bow-street; and at Messrs. Cramer, Beale, and Co.'s, 201, Regent-street. Also at Messrs. Andrews, Ebers, Hookham, Lender, Mitchell, Olivier, Bond-street; Bailey, Regent-street; and Mr. Sams, St. James's-street.